

SHAPING ALTERNATIVE FUTURES FOR WEST AFRICA

**EXPLORING THE ROLE OF
CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE
REGION'S 'PUBLIC SQUARE'**

**Gordon
Institute
of Business
Science**
University
of Pretoria



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INTRODUCTION AND DOCUMENT STRUCTURE

The purpose of this study was to develop a long-range view of the major changes taking place in the West African region, and the member states of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in particular. By developing a future-orientated perspective of change in West Africa, the study provides the basis for contemplating alternative plausible scenarios for the region. These, consisting of a baseline (business-as-usual) and two alternative stories of the state of the region by 2063, provide a provocative narrative depiction of the interplay between political and economic, socio-cultural and technological factors that will shape the region's future. These stories, while informed conjecture, enable the development of proactive foresight and strategic insight in the options before civil society leaders, policy makers and business leaders wanting to secure a prosperous and stable future for the people of West Africa.

The document is structured for maximum accessibility to the insights derived from the work. As such, a brief note on the methodology used is followed by an executive summary and alternative scenarios, which were produced on the basis of the trend analysis and research. This concise first part gives the reader a window into the complex and expansive subject under study. Thereafter follow lists of identified trends under their thematic categories, which are supported by the extensive desk research conducted in preparation for the in-country component of the study. The output of this study should ideally be used as an input to stakeholder deliberation on policies, plans and strategies developed for the region.



METHODOLOGY: TREND SCANNING AND ALTERNATIVE SCENARIOS

This study is comprised of an iterative scenario planning process aimed at producing a baseline scenario and alternative future scenarios for the region of West Africa. The purpose of these scenarios is to aid leaders in formulating strategic and policy responses to the trends shaping the future of the region. In order to produce a robust set of alternative scenarios, the following key project steps were taken: Three research phases were conceptualised.

PHASE 1: Desk research was conducted in the form of a contextual study of the (i) Trends Shaping West Africa, and the (ii) Role of Civil Society (and Religious Institutions in particular) within the region's public square. This was done by using an environmental scanning method, which identifies key events, drivers of change, actions by significant actors in the system, drawing heavily on secondary quantitative and qualitative data to produce a cursory assessment of the current trajectory of the region. These insights were compiled into a "pre-research" report that formed the basis of in-country engagements and interviews.

PHASE 2: Virtual and in-country interviews and a set of workshops were conducted where semi-structured interviews with actors in the region provided a second iteration of research and review. These included; direct 1-on-1 interviews with civil society leaders in Lagos, Nigeria. Participation in a 3-day intensive high level stakeholder dialogue on "the Future of the Sahel region" which was hosted by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Dakar, Senegal, with participants including heads of state, representatives of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the African Union (AU), the African Development Bank (AfDB), and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Similarly, interviews were conducted with local civil society leaders in Dakar, Senegal. Observations were recorded from attendance of a portion of the 2015 Annual Economic Summit of Nigeria, held in Abuja. Local community leaders were consulted in Lungi, Sierra Leone. This array of interactions served both to confirm existing findings and add particular nuance to the relative importance and systemic relevance of key drivers of change in the region. Simultaneously, the in-depth immersion of the researchers into the region added immeasurably to the qualitative analytic dimension of the study.

PHASE 3: The final stage of the study, entailing an analysis and strategic review, aimed at assessing the alternative scenarios and adding to the strategic agenda of civil society leaders for public engagement in West Africa, is understood as an ongoing process of informal and unstructured dialogue at organisational level.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND ALTERNATIVE SCENARIOS

After extensive analysis and the exploration of over 130 trends affecting the future of West Africa, and the ECOWAS region in particular, a set of 6 megatrends were synthesised that are expected to form the baseline scenario for the region. These are:

- **POLITICAL MEGATREND:** Vulnerable, Hollow Nation-State Institutions, Sustain Short-termist Plutocratic Cronyism, Undermining Government Legitimacy amid Rising Democratic Demands;
- **ECONOMIC MEGATREND:** Economic Duality Worsens as Emergent Agro-pastoralism and Commodity Boom-Busts Overshadow Meagre Diversification in the South, the Region Hamstrung by Infrastructure Backlog;
- **SOCIAL MEGATREND:** Poor and Unequal Strata Persists amid Growing Access to Basic, Increasingly Urban Services as Rural Communities Weather the Rising Risk of Warlord Landlords;
- **TECHNOLOGY MEGATREND:** Rapid Mortality Rate Decline while Centralised, Costly Energy Constraints Overcome only by Mobile Connectivity of the Otherwise Technologically Detached;
- **CULTURAL MEGATREND:** Zealous Religious Polarity Emerges amid Ethnocide of Traditionalisms as Hopelessness Sees Collapsing Norms and Rising Pockets of Attractiveness for Radical Islam in the North;
- **ECOLOGICAL MEGATREND:** Rising Food Insecurity amid Desertification, Climate Variability and Water Tensions.

These megatrends indicate a baseline scenario (expected) for the ECOWAS region:

THIRSTY PILGRIMAGE FROM THE SAHEL

Illusive Stability Strained Between Struggling Governance Institutions and Narrow Extractive Business Interests, as Ideologically Polarising West Africans Grow Increasingly Informed, Vocal and Demanding.

In 2063, West Africans still dream of a better future as they watch political and business elites jet in and out of the region on Kenyan Air to trade in East and Southern Africa and the world. Exporting oil and gas has turned Lagos' Victoria Island into a hive of finance institution's regional offices. Shopfronts for luxury goods and scenes of smartly dressed African's rushing along newly build pavements to sky rise office buildings set the scene. However, some Nigerians, especially those in the northeast, now refer to themselves as the "real Nigeria". What they see on the Island is precisely that, an island of opulence in a sea of human insecurity and

underdevelopment. Talk on local digital radio, of a "new Islamic path for the north" gains traction as the vast majority of citizens feel excluded and even alienated from the new boom extractive industries situated mainly in the south. Secondary industrialisation is stop-start, holding promise, but no widespread relief. The old idea of ECOWAS, a regional community for economic cooperation, is slowly losing ground to the new idea of a "Regional Leadership of the Sahel for Sahelians". Informal networks from especially Mali, Niger and Chad find resonance with religious affiliates from the likes of Senegal, Burkina Faso and Nigeria. These funnel money and weapons to new pseudo-educational hotspots for extremist ideology. This new normal began to hit home when the Deputy President of ECOWAS was assassinated by car bomb in 2028 while on a regional visit to Mali.

Even the "Rapid Infrastructure Integration Investment Programme" (IIIP) planned for 2025-2035, an audacious, internationally funded, inter-state strategy for a road-rail-barge-waterway link between Senegal and Cameroon, via the border between Ghana and Burkina Faso, did not succeed in energising public opinion towards greater integration. Free movement collapsed under the strain of insecurity. Instead, narrow national political interests and crony corruption have simply enhanced pockets of investment and excellence in areas that were previously stable. Nigeria continues to lead the region in entrepreneurship, Ghana setting the pace in human capital, and Senegal attracting significant coastal investments by 2nd generation expats from the US and Europe. These good intentions have little real effect in reforming the system and are a drop in the ocean of human insecurity. Although incremental gains in democratic stability are made in Sierra Leone and Liberia, in relative historic terms, the disruption of a newer phenomenon of highly organised migrant maritime piracy undermines attractiveness for large-scale business investment. The region's populations survive on subsistence and aid.

As citizens are increasingly informed about developments in their nations and the region through mobile connectivity, they mobilise around shared world-views and religious affiliation – some for good and some for ill. The 2020 clampdown on "unregulated mega-church enterprises" deepens the rift between the state and civil society. On the positive side, the 2030 Plan of Action for Social-Entrepreneurship and Youth Empowerment (PAC-SEY) driven by Religions for Peace (RfP), an interfaith forum and network for collective action, sets in motion a regional social movement for social justice by local religious communities. These initiatives were met initially with suspicion by politicians due to the growing impacts of

religious extremism. This initial mistrust undermined the potential for scaling up for impact through public-private-civil society partnerships. Although the impacts of the initiative are highly localised and of a small scale, the combination of human capital development, new enterprise development, and inherent sustainability of the models employed, show promise of a new approach for bottom-up development in the region. Projects that serve as enablers of agro-business are particularly significant in that they mitigate sporadic food insecurity. There is a glimmer of hope in a “tough place to do business”. A recent statement by the UNDP regional head effectively captures the region’s plight, “West Africa remains the part of the globe with the most innate promise for prosperity and human flourishing, but is simultaneously the most volatile and unpredictable. No amount of intervention by the G20 can lead the region’s renewal. The leadership, in economic, political and social terms, must come from within.”

OASIS OF OPPORTUNITY IN THE SAHEL

Improving Stability Sustained By Rapidly Improving Governance Institutions and Innovative Inclusive Business Drive, as Aspirant West Africans Grow Empowered and Informed, Visible and Prosperous.

In 2063, West Africans are realising the dream of a better future as they hold political and business elites accountable for stewardship of their shared future. The new airline, WestGo Air, a regional initiative led by Nigeria’s former Arik, is a symbol of the region’s advances, trading with East and Southern Africa and the world. Exporting oil and gas has turned Lagos’ Victoria Island into a hive of finance institution’s regional offices, serving as a springboard for investment in Monrovia and beyond. Shop-fronts for locally manufactured goods pop up in newly painted multi-use buildings along bustling streets, and scenes of proud African’s rushing along newly built pavements to an array of Agro-businesses; small and medium-sized factories and office buildings set the scene. Some West Africans, especially those in the south, now refer to themselves as “West African First”. What they see on the Island is to them a symbol of a shared “rise”, an island of opportunity in a sea of human potential and early development. Talk on local digital radio, of a “new sustainable path for the north” gains traction as the vast majority of citizens begin to see the investments in education and enabling infrastructure from the new boom of extractive industries situated mainly in the south. Secondary industrialisation is chaotic, but effervescent, holding promise for widespread relief. The new idea of ECOWAS2, a regional community for economic cooperation and importantly, coordination, is the rallying cry for international investment in partnership with the business enablement network, “Sahelians for Success”. Informal networks, especially from Mali, Niger and Chad still find resonance with radicalised religious affiliates from the likes of Senegal, Burkina Faso and Nigeria, but these groups struggle to disrupt the momentum of rapid socio-economic development. Their attempts to funnel money and weapons to new pseudo-educational hotspots for extremist ideology are regularly foiled and frustrated. This new normal began to hit home when the Deputy President of ECOWAS2, a devout Muslim cleric, publically disavowed extremism at the 2028 Economic Summit in Abuja, calling on other religious leaders to do likewise. The “Rapid Infrastructure Integration Investment Programme”

(IIIP) planned for 2025-2035, an audacious, internationally funded, inter-state strategy for a road-rail-barge-waterway link between Senegal and Cameroon, via the border between Ghana and Burkina Faso succeeds in energising public opinion towards greater integration. Free movement was underpinned by improvements in security. Narrow national political interests and crony corruption have been overshadowed by pragmatic cooperation, seeing pockets of strategic investment and excellence connecting previously stable areas with those less stable, having a positive multiplier effect as result. Nigeria continues to lead the region in entrepreneurship, Ghana setting the pace in human capital, and Senegal attracting significant coastal investments by 2nd generation expats from the US and Europe; the most notable being the New Liberian Institute for Equitable Economic Development (NLIED), funded by donors from over 50 countries. These “agents of connectivity” serve as a reservoir of expertise and resources, having a real effect in reforming the system and are a key mechanism in the intricate endeavour of fostering human security. Since surprising gains in democratic stability have been made in Sierra Leone and Liberia, in relative historic terms, the initial disruption of a newer phenomenon of highly organised migrant maritime piracy was quickly quelled through community-based security intelligence initiatives, seeing the attractiveness for large-scale business investments accelerate. The region’s population still relies somewhat on subsistence and aid, but the signs of upward mobility are obvious.

Since citizens are informed more regularly about developments in their nations and the region through mobile connectivity, they mobilise around a shared vision, drawing for inspiration from their religious affiliation – mostly for good and some for ill. The 2020 clampdown on “unregulated mega-church enterprises” initially threatened to create a rift between the state and civil society, but led to the formation of a “Forum for Self-Regulation of Faith Communities (FfSR-FC). On the positive side, the 2030 Plan of Action for Social-Entrepreneurship and Youth Empowerment (PAC-SEY) driven by Religions for Peace (RfP), an interfaith forum and network for collective action, set in motion a regional social movement for social justice by local religious communities. While these initiatives were initially met with suspicion by politicians, this initial mistrust evaporated as their contribution became clear, the potential for scaling up for impact through public-private-civil society partnerships becoming a next logical step. Although the impacts of the initiative began in a highly localised and of a small scale manner, the combination of human capital development, new enterprise development, and inherent sustainability of the models employed, are now seen to be the bedrock of local government capacity, showing promise of a new approach for bottom-up development in the region. Projects that serve as enablers of agro-business, specifically agro-processing, are particularly significant in that they enhance supply for a emerging food export market. They are an engine of hope in a “complex, but exciting place to do business”. A recent statement by the UNDP regional head effectively captures the region’s emergence, “West Africa has always been a part of the globe with immeasurable innate promise for prosperity and human flourishing. It is now organising to realise that potential. The G20 needs no longer concern itself with intervention, instead there is a partnership in the region’s renewal, since the leadership, in economic, political and social terms, has come from within.”

BETWEEN DESPAIR AND HOPE IN THE SAHEL

Fluctuating Stability Sustained by Incrementally Improving Governance Institutions and a Mixed Bag of Extractive and Inclusive Business Drives, as Impatient West Africans Become Empowered and Informed, Vocal and Pensive.

In 2063, West Africans are grasping at the dream of a better future as they try to hold political and business elites accountable for stewardship of their shared resources. The failed airline, WestGo Air, a regional initiative led by Nigeria's former Arik, is a symbol of the region's paradoxical advances and intermittent trading with East and Southern Africa and the world. Exporting oil and gas has turned Lagos' Victoria Island into a hive of finance institution's temporary offices, serving as a pioneering station for investment in Monrovia and beyond. Shopfronts for locally manufactured goods come and go in the increasingly congested streets, and scenes of hurried Africans rushing along partially built pavements to an array of job-seekers' terminals set the scene. Some West Africans, especially those in the south, now refer to themselves as "having escaped". What they see on the Island is to them a symbol of a way out of "survival mode", an island of scarce opportunity in a sea of human need and underdevelopment. Talk on local digital radio, of needing a "new sustainable path for the north" gains limited traction as only pockets of citizens begin to see the investments in education and enabling infrastructure from the new boom of extractive industries situated mainly in the south. Secondary industrialisation is chaotic and sporadic, holding little promise for widespread relief. The new idea of ECOWAS2, a regional community for economic cooperation and importantly, coordination, is a weak rallying cry for international investment that falls largely on deaf ears. Informal networks, especially from Mali, Niger and Chad, find occasional resonance, especially among the youth, with radicalised religious affiliates from the likes of Senegal, Burkina Faso and Nigeria, but they struggle to maintain their momentum as people experience staggered mobility. Their attempts to funnel money and weapons to new pseudo-educational hotspots for extremist ideology are occasionally foiled and frustrated. This new normal began to hit home when the Deputy President of ECOWAS2, a Muslim convert to Christianity, publically called for a "healthy separation between faith and the public square, while respecting both", at the 2028 Economic Summit in Abuja, calling on other religious leaders to do likewise.

The "Rapid Infrastructure Integration Investment Programme" (IIIP) planned for 2025-2035, an audacious, internationally funded, inter-state strategy for a road-rail-barge-waterway link between Senegal and Cameroon, via the border between Ghana and Burkina Faso has succeed temporarily in energising public opinion towards greater integration. Free movement is increasingly underpinned by meaningful improvements in security. Narrow national political interests and crony corruption have been outshone at times by pragmatic cooperation, seeing pockets of strategic investment and excellence connecting previously stable areas with those less

stable, having a positive multiplier effect as result. Nigeria continues to lead the region in entrepreneurship, Ghana setting the pace in human capital, and Senegal attracting significant coastal investments by 2nd generation expats from the US and Europe, the most notable being the New Liberian Institute for Equitable Economic Development (NLIEED), funded by donors from over 50 countries. These "agents of connectivity" serve as a reservoir of expertise and resources, having a real effect in reforming the system and are a key mechanism in the intricate endeavour of fostering human security. Since inconsistent gains in democratic stability have been made in Sierra Leone and Liberia, in relative historic terms, the disruption of a newer phenomenon of highly organised migrant maritime piracy remains difficult to quell due to community complicity undermining security intelligence initiatives, seeing the attractiveness for large-scale business investment fluctuate. The region's populations still rely somewhat on subsistence and aid, but the signs of upward mobility come and go.

Since citizens are informed more regularly about developments in their nations and the region through mobile connectivity, they mobilise around individualised aspirations, drawing for inspiration from their religious affiliations – mostly for good and some for ill. The 2020 clampdown on "unregulated mega-church enterprises" initially deepened the rift between the state and civil society, but led to the formation of a Forum for Self-Regulation of Faith Communities (FfSR-FC). On the positive side, the 2030 Plan of Action for Social-Entrepreneurship and Youth Empowerment (PAC-SEY) driven by Religions for Peace (RfP), an interfaith forum and network for collective action, set in motion a budding regional social movement for social justice by local religious communities. While politicians initially met these initiatives with suspicion, this initial mistrust evaporated as their contribution became clear, the potential for scaling up for impact through public-private-civil society partnerships becoming a next logical step. Although the impacts of the initiative began highly localised and on a small scale, the combination of human capital development, new enterprise development, and inherent sustainability of the models employed, are now seen to be a promising alternative to otherwise unreliable local government capacity, showing signs of a new approach for bottom-up development in the region. Projects that serve as enablers of agro-business are particularly significant in that they mitigate sporadic food insecurity while producing useful social networks across supply-chains that have a stabilising effect in community relations. They are a broker of hope in a "challenging, but rewarding place to do business". A recent statement by the UNDP regional head effectively captures the region's progress, "West Africa has always been a part of the globe with immeasurable innate promise for prosperity and human flourishing. It is showing signs of organising to realise that potential. The G20 needs to continue its commitment to interventions where needed and partnerships where possible for the region's renewal. Ultimately, the leadership for economic, political and social solutions will need to come from within."



TREND ANALYSIS

MACRO-ENVIRONMENTAL TRENDS



POLITICAL MEGATREND

Vulnerable, Hollow Nation-State Institutions, Sustain Short-termist Plutocratic Cronyism, Undermining Government Legitimacy as Democratic Demands Rise.

- 1 Anocracies rising faster than democracy while autocracy declines sharply
- 2 Dependence on Foreign Aid
- 3 Post-Colonial Institutional Influence
- 4 Recurring Tensions and War
- 5 Militarised Political Change (coups)
- 6 Vocal supra-national Resistance to Coup d'état
- 7 Vocal supra-national Support for Constitutionality
- 8 Rising Popular Support for Democracy.
- 9 Popular support for term limits.
- 10 Civil society activism via the military.
- 11 Stronger recognition of value of AU membership
- 12 Rising legitimacy of democratic process (election).
- 13 Marginal de-tribalisation (incl. religion) of elections.
- 14 Marginal prioritisation of economic growth by the electorate
- 15 Prioritisation of security in response to Boko Haram.
- 16 Marginal prioritisation of state delivery (electricity).
- 17 Undermining of elections due to security.
- 18 Recurring resource conflict.
- 19 Intensifying terrorism.
- 20 Distant peri-urban conflict.
- 21 Population pressure.
- 22 Merger between economic marginalisation and extremism
- 23 Pocketed international terrorism networking
- 24 Thriving extremist ideology due to marginalisation & inequality
- 25 Religious and ethnic wealth divide
- 26 Alienation on social stratification
- 27 Growing political will to tackle insecurity
- 28 Territorial Uncertainty and Variability and “non-managed spaces” – dynamic system (UNDP, Dakar)
- 29 Political Short-termism undermining regional strategy
- 30 Group Opportunism versus Collective Interests (UNDP, Dakar)
- 31 Emergence of mafia-style networks and al-Qaeda -type rhetoric. (UNDP, Dakar)
- 32 Feeling of abandonment among remote communities, undermining state legitimacy (UNDP, Dakar)
- 33 Failure of some states to bear their own burden of security (UNDP, Dakar)
- 34 Civil servants embedded in trafficking-extremist networks (UNDP, Dakar)
- 35 Centralism of Governance Institutions versus mobility and diversity (UNDP, Dakar)
- 36 Crisis of Legitimacy of leaders and governments, particularly in remote regions (UNDP, Dakar)



ECONOMIC MEGATREND

Economic Duality between Emergent Agro-pastoralism and Commodities, Overshadow Meagre Diversification in South Hamstrung by Infrastructure Backlog

- 1 Notable agriculture dependence (employment, livelihoods and export)
- 2 Emerging agro-pastoralism
- 3 Notable comparative economic growth
- 4 Commodity boom on the back of improved policy
- 5 Prospective (resource) growth spurts
- 6 Growing maritime economic activity in Gulf of Guinea
- 7 Growing hydrocarbon reserve discoveries
- 8 Increased piracy, kidnappings and armed robbery at sea
- 9 Undermining of security through corruption and organised crime
- 10 Growing extractive sector dependence
- 11 Incremental diversification
- 12 Hub of emergent manufacturing and services (Nigeria)
- 13 Commodity price volatility
- 14 Urbanisation on the back of agricultural exit, industrial development
- 15 Vital dependence on agriculture (65% of population)
- 16 Domestic investment
- 17 Foreign investment
- 18 Dominant extractive sector
- 19 Accelerating infrastructure investments
- 20 Constrained infrastructure for business
- 21 Most FID from outside ECOWAS region
- 22 Infrastructure development lag between North and South Africa
- 23 Coherent and promising ground transport network
- 24 Underdeveloped railways network (extractives legacy)
- 25 Vast watercourse interdependence
- 26 Budding regional free air travel and airport infrastructure
- 27 Growing economic integration
- 28 Illegal clandestine traffic (UNDP, Dakar)
- 29 Persistent inadequate infrastructure (UNDP, Dakar)
- 30 Micro credit programme by Boko Haram more efficient than state alternative (UNDP, Dakar)
- 31 Trafficking as “survival strategies” by communities – disconnect with elitist discourse (UNDP, Dakar)





SOCIAL MEGATREND

Poor and Unequal Strata Persists Amid Growing Access to Basic, Increasingly Urban Services at the Risk of Rural Warlord Landlords.

- 1 Persistent high levels of poverty and inequality
- 2 Improvements in human development from a low base
- 3 Notable declining malnourishment as per MDGs
- 4 Marginal improvements in child mortality rates
- 5 Emerging skilled birth attendance rate
- 6 Positive improvement of access to water
- 7 Urbanization outstripping population growth
- 9 Growing push-pull migration dynamic
- 9 Sharp growth in settlements around villages, and towns while medium sized cities stagnate
- 10 Unique persistence of rural population in parts
- 11 Reduced Mortality, due to health and medicine (UNDP, Dakar)
- 12 Sahel, used to but can no longer feed (support) its population (UNDP, Dakar)
- 13 Emergence of warlords on the back of criminal networks (UNDP, Dakar)



TECHNOLOGY MEGATREND

Centralised, Costly Energy Constraints Overcome by Mobile Connectivity of the Otherwise Detached.

- 1 Over half energy deprived
- 2 Costly electricity centralised to urban centres
- 3 Inadequate energy infrastructure (plants & distribution)
- 4 Household biomass reliance
- 5 Growing hydrocarbon-energy paradox
- 6 Emerging gas for energy option
- 7 Growing recognition of renewable energy potential
- 8 Majority radio-based news access
- 9 Growing television penetration
- 10 Stagnant newspaper penetration
- 11 Negligible internet-based news access
- 12 Rapid mobile access via cell phone
- 13 Revolutionary technology solutions via mobile (banking)
- 14 Enabling mobile environment
- 16 Transforming connectedness of people-to-people and remittances
- 17 Slow internet penetration on weak infrastructure
- 18 Solar power potential recognition (UNDP, Dakar)



CULTURAL MEGATREND

Zealous Religious Duality Amid Ethnocide and Hopelessness See Collapsing Norms and Rising Pockets of Attractiveness of Radical Islam.

- 1 Strong adherence to religious beliefs
- 2 Majority converted to either Christian or Muslim religion
- 3 Decline in traditional African religion
- 4 Only SSA Muslim majority
- 5 Muslims, mostly Sunni
- 6 Diverse Christian denominational affiliations
- 7 Sharp rise in Pentecostalism
- 8 Strong Chastain and Muslim Eschatological expectations
- 9 Experiential and emotive faith practice
- 10 Muslims set out marginally outgrowth Christians on the strength of demography.
- 11 Refusal of fatality (reliance culture), (UNDP Dakar)
- 12 Persistent diversity of disparate communities (UNDP, Dakar)
- 13 Ongoing ethnocide – uprooting of rural groups from tradition by powerful cultures (UNDP, Dakar)
- 14 Declining hope among the youth (UNDP, Dakar)
- 15 Emergent coordination for a “Caliphate from East to West” (UNDP, Dakar)
- 16 Intentional Islamic strategy for: Social Investment > Legitimacy > Educational Investment (UNDP, Dakar)
- 17 Shift in Islam to localization of sacred places of worship versus pilgrimage (UNDP, Dakar)
- 18 Collapsing normative (traditional values) social structures (UNDP, Dakar).



DEMOGRAPHIC MEGATREND

Accelerating Youth Bulge Migrates to Urban Coastline.

- 1 High population growth rate, declining very slowly
- 2 Accelerating youth bulge
- 3 Rising “dividend-destabilisation” nexus
- 4 Growing ageing population as life expectancy rises
- 5 Densely populated coasts.



ECOLOGICAL MEGATREND

Rising Food Insecurity Amid Desertification, Climate Variability and Water Tensions.

- 1

Growing food import dependence
- 2

Climate
- 3

Wide array of climate variability
- 4

Rainfall vulnerability
- 5

Desert transition/tipping zone
- 6

Reducing rainfall and falling stream flows
- 7

Increasing water demand on consumption
- 8

Increased water infrastructure construction
- 9

Rising water tensions
- 10

Marginal greenhouse gas emissions, but deforestation and bio-mass for energy based
- 11

Vulnerable to global warming with floods and droughts
- 12

Vulnerable to sea level rise
- 13

Desertification (UNDP, Senegal)*250 km south per century
- 14

Desert environment to north as invariant factor. (UNDP, Senegal)
- 15

Drought > flood > cholera spell, cycles

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION AND ENGAGEMENT MEGATREND

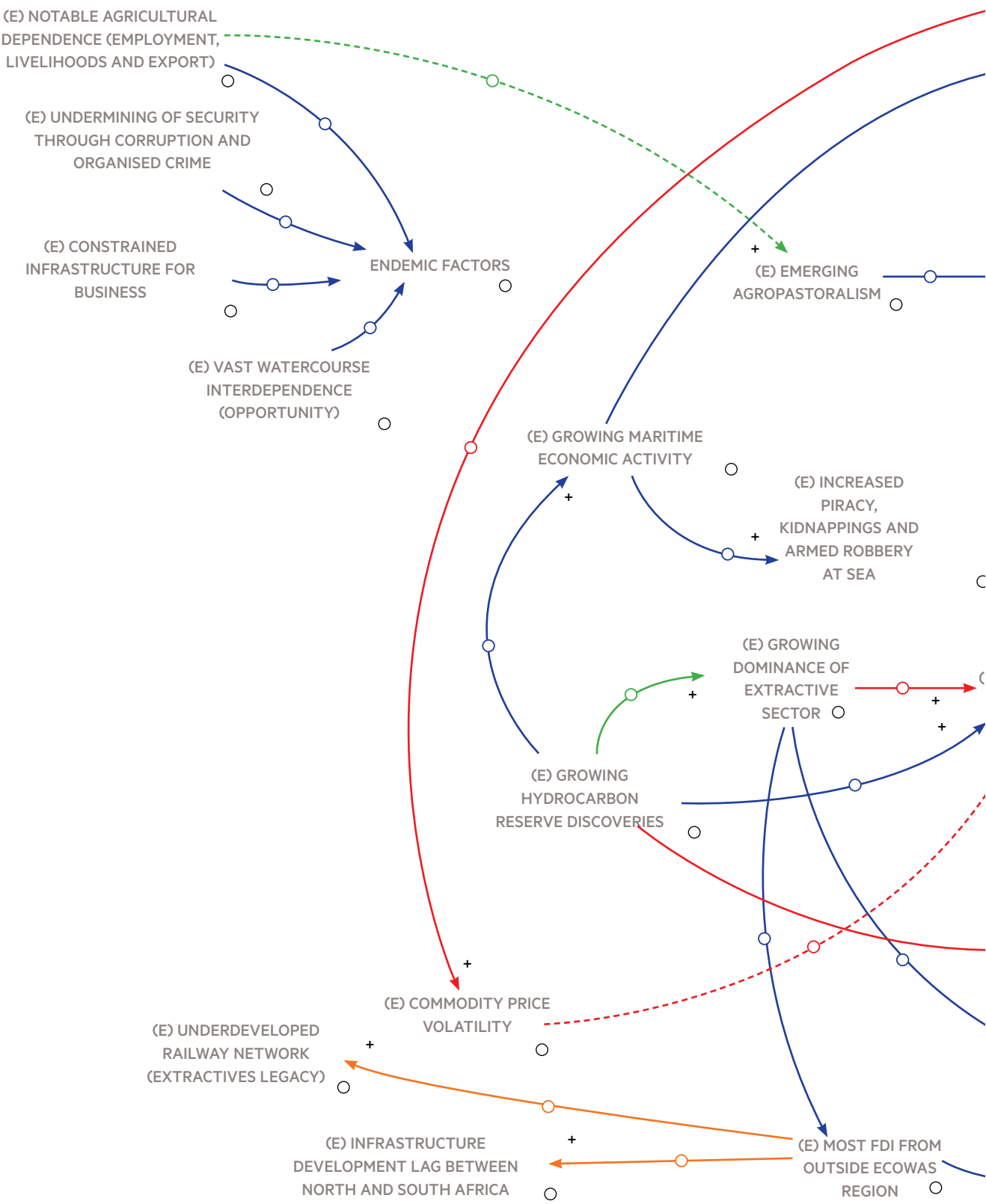
Individualist Materialism Couple Proselysation Drive and Grassroot Adherence, while Thin Ecumenism Occasionally Emerges from Social Irrelevance

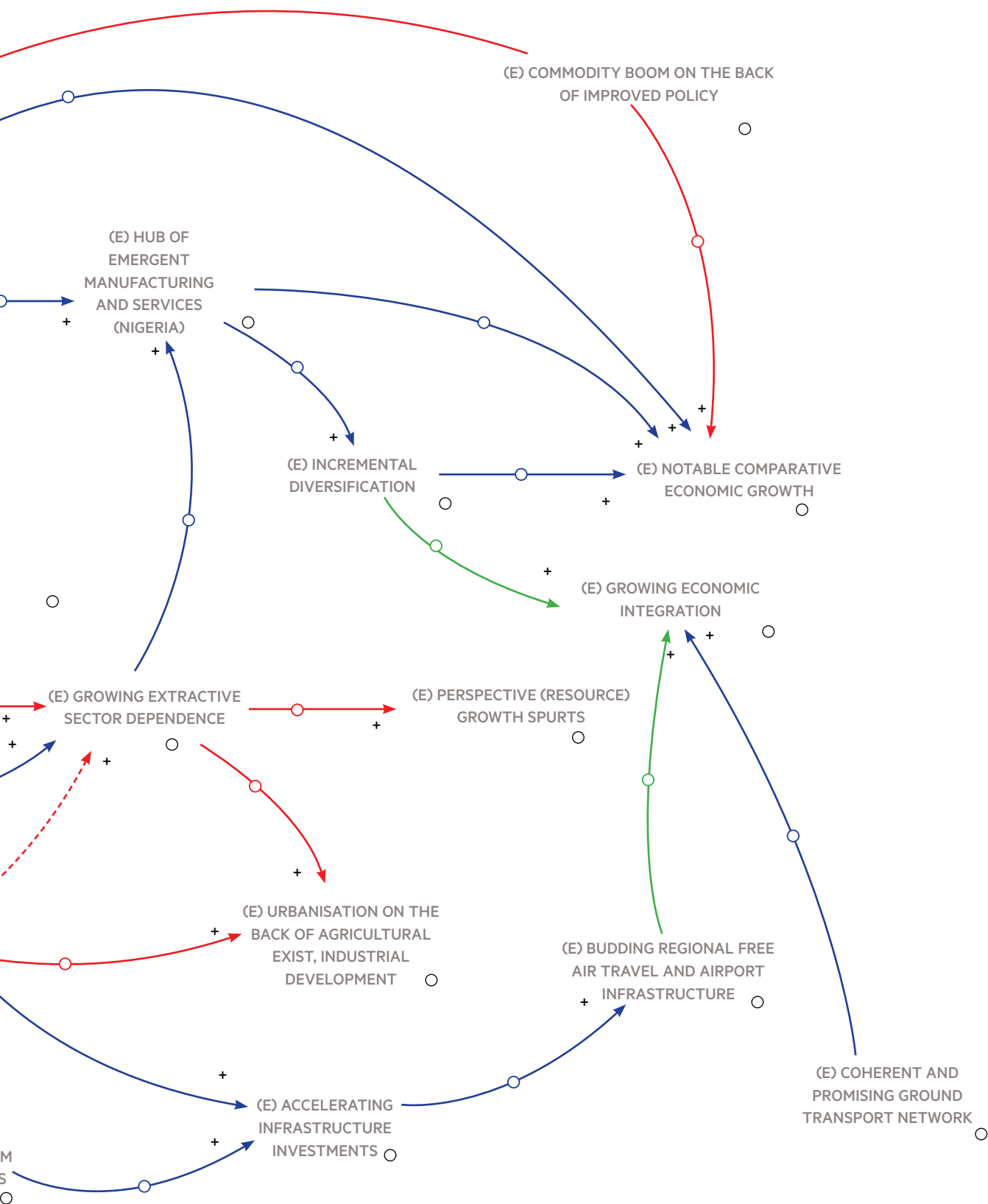
ORGANIC STRUCTURES	ECUMENICAL (META) STRUCTURES	INTERFAITH STRUCTURES	LEGACY AND PRESENT ENGAGEMENT: (POLITICAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC)
1 Rooted in anti-colonial self-determination movements among intelligentsia. 2 Persistent Pan-regional undertone. 3 Persistent student movement underbelly. 4 Persistent broad coalition between student bodies, community organizations, religious groups, trade unions and woman's associations. 5 Selected professional network enablement. 6 Emergent anti-authoritarianism role for civil society movements. 7 Facilitative and mediation role for Church structures in transitions or before elections. 8 Continued external (Western) Assistance. 9 Exponential growth of NGOs. 10 Independence of civil society under pressure. 11 Vulnerability to global economic and cultural forces. 12 Marked contribution to fostering social cohesion. 13 High levels of proselytization.	1 Notable capacity: Strong memberships, complex and capable national organizations and politically sophisticated leaders, financial security, independence and international contacts. 2 Occasional competition or inter-group suspicion. 3 Orientated towards "development agenda". 4 Post-missionary era autonomy among Christian churches. 5 Widely representative of mainstream Churches globally. 6 Strong evangelical and educational thrusts. 7 Experienced in grassroots development (agriculture etc.)	1 Emergence on regional networks. 2 Experienced with peace-building, shared security, sustainable development.	1 Examples of inter-faith, cross-sectoral activism against violence and war (Liberia). 2 Increasing scrutiny (monitoring and evaluation) without robust legal mechanisms.

SYSTEMS ANALYSIS

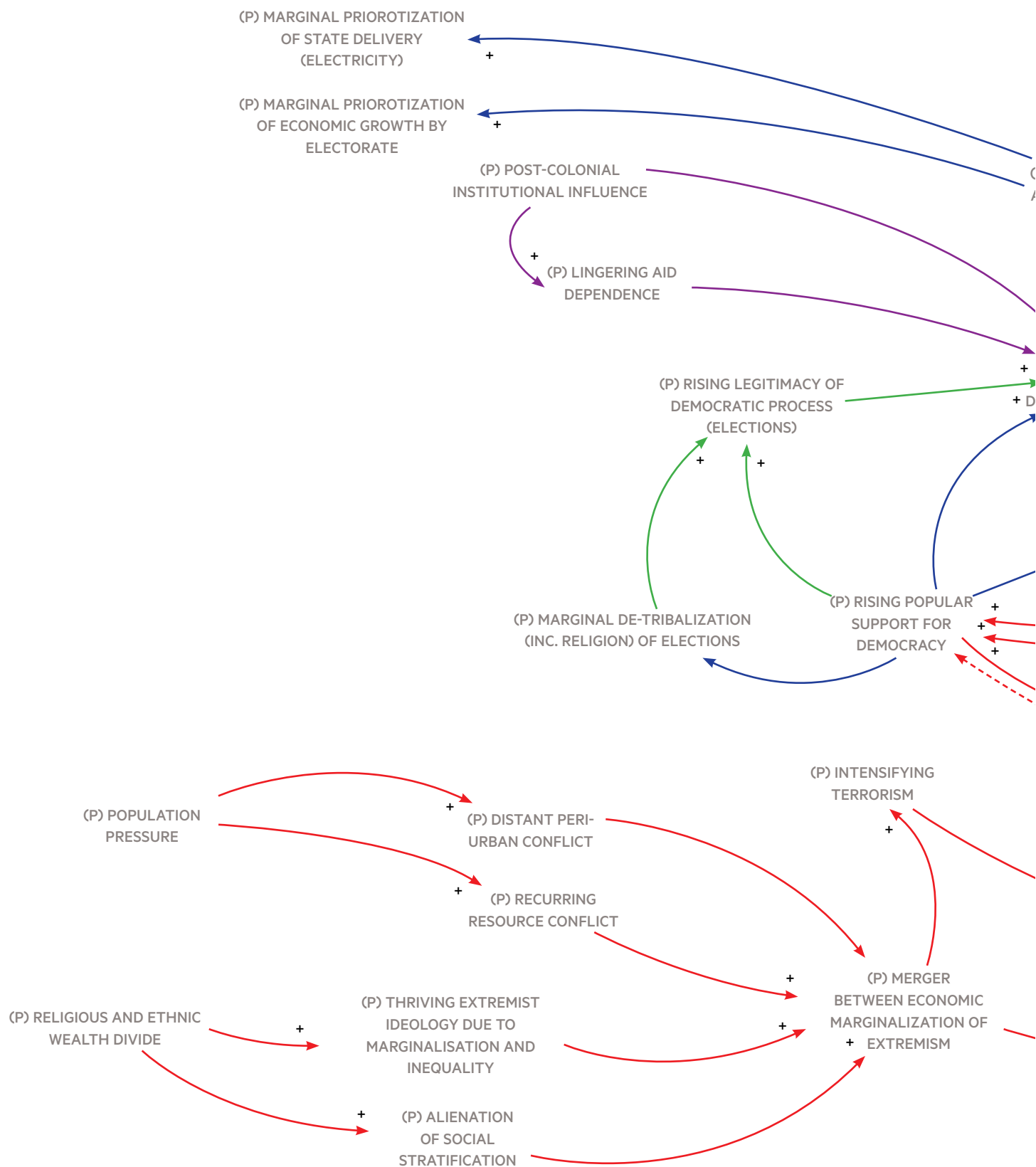
Systems Analysis of Economic Change Factors in West Africa:

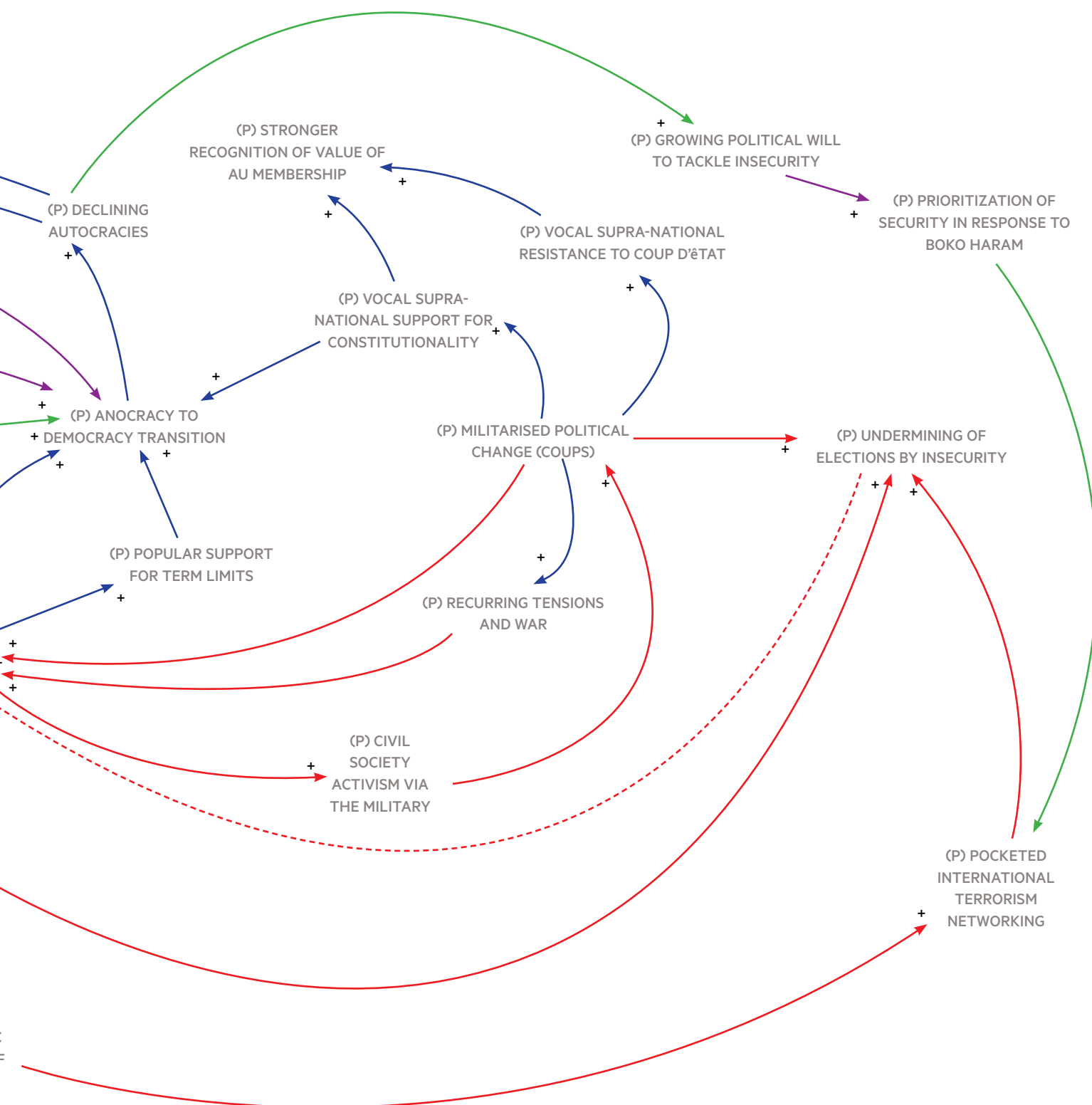
SHAPING ALTERNATIVE FUTURES FOR WEST AFRICA: EXPLORING THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE REGION'S PUBLIC SQUARE





Systems Analysis of Political Change Factors in West Africa:





BACKGROUND RESEARCH

PART 1: TRENDS SHAPING THE FUTURE OF WEST AFRICA

This section will explore the major trends shaping the region, with particular emphasis on the following trends in the macro environment;

POLITICAL TRENDS: Current political status quo across the region, in terms of; political systems, stability of the systems and comparison to the nation's strata with the socio-cultural composition;

ECONOMIC TRENDS: Developments in terms of investment, both domestic and foreign direct investment with a broad indication of sectors targeted, infrastructure development as an indicator of fixed asset formation, and integration in real terms in the form of monetary unions, trade and regulation or migration policy

SOCIAL TRENDS: Outlining the demographic trends in a cursory fashion to depict the broad future age cohort distribution, cultural-linguistic composition and specifically religious affiliation and practice at national levels

Technological Trends: Advancement in terms of access to electricity, mobile connectivity as an indicator of technology adoption and the extent of media proliferation and consumption

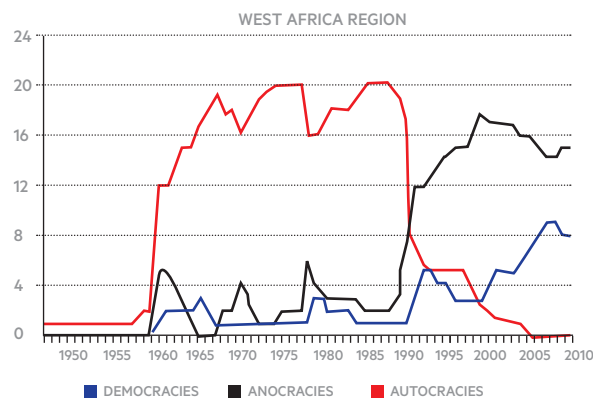
ECOLOGICAL TRENDS: Macro environmental changes in terms of rainfall and climate, availability of arable land and the condition of water management and reserves.

These will be outlined at a macro level in order to derive a baseline forecast of the changes shaping the future of the region.

POLITICAL AND GOVERNANCE TRENDS

Political transitions in West Africa: from colonialism to today

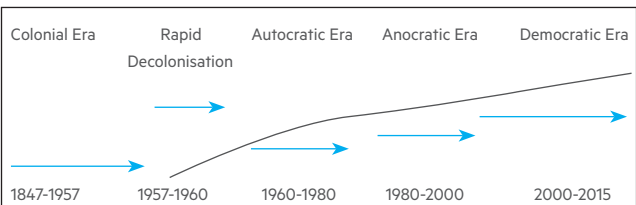
FIGURE 1: REGIONAL REGIMES BY TYPE, 1946-2010



Source: Center for Systemic Peace. (2014). Regional Trends in Armed Conflict and Governance, 1946-2010: West Africa Region. Retrieved from: <http://www.systemicpeace.org/regions/regtrends.htm> (accessed 24 August 2015).

Apart from Liberia – an independent country since 1847 – all of West Africa was colonised until the late 1950s. The independence of Ghana from Britain in 1957 precipitated a wave of decolonisation across the region. By the end of 1960, 11 West African countries had gained their independence, 8 of which from France. By 1975, all 15 countries that today form the membership of ECOWAS, were independent (RFI, 2010).

Most of these newly independent states could be classified as autocracies (Center for Systemic Peace, 2014). Autocracies remained the dominant regime type across the region until the late 1980s, when the end of the Cold War saw a decline in the perceived legitimacy of this type of system. As illustrated in Figure 1 above, a decline in the number of autocracies was accompanied by a rise in anocracies. An anocracy can be defined as a political system that is neither fully democratic nor fully autocratic and often vulnerable to political instability (Vreeland, 2008). This trend continued throughout the 1990s and into the early 2000s. A noticeable rise in democracies is visible from 1990 onwards.



For the last 25 years, the trend appears to be a development broadly towards more democracy. However, the transition has been neither smooth nor irreversible. The 1990s and early 2000s were years of transition and of instability. For instance, between 1989 and 1991, bloody civil wars broke out in Liberia and Sierra Leone, with conflict lasting well into the early 2000s. By 2002 and as the wars in these two countries wound down, another war erupted in the Ivory Coast.

For many years, military coups d'état were the main form of regime change. This has continued to more recent times,

though regional and continental bodies increasingly frown upon the practice. Since 2010, for instance, West Africa has seen five coups (in Niger (BBC News, 2010), Guinea Bissau (Djata-& Larson, 2012), Mali (New York Times, 2012) and two in Burkina Faso (Berman, 2014 and Butiga, 2015)) and at least seven further attempts (including in Guinea Bissau, Niger, Mali, Ivory Coast, Benin and The Gambia). These takeovers and attempts have been condemned swiftly by both ECOWAS (Akenroye, 2012) and the African Union (Sturman, 2011), reflecting regional and continental opposition to unconstitutional changes of government.

The broad shift towards support for democracy described above is also borne out in public opinion data. The Afrobarometer is a representative public opinion survey conducted at regular intervals in more than 30 African countries. Thirteen of the 15 ECOWAS states (all but Gambia and Guinea Bissau) participated in the fifth round of Afrobarometer surveys that took place between 2011 and 2013. In this round, 75.9% of West African respondents agreed with the statement “Democracy is preferable to any other kind of government”, while only 9.7% agreed with the statement “In some circumstances a non-democratic government can be preferable” (custom data from Afrobarometer R5, 2011-2013).

While close to 90% of respondents felt that they lived in a democracy, over two-thirds saw problems with the extent of democracy (30.7% saw major problems and 36.6% minor problems). Similarly, in terms of satisfaction with democracy, the picture is decidedly mixed (see Figure 2 below): in 2012, over two-thirds of respondents in Ghana and Senegal were broadly satisfied with the extent of democracy in their countries, while in Nigeria almost two-thirds were generally dissatisfied (custom data from Afrobarometer R5, 2011-2013). North Africa during the so-called Arab Spring, namely what

to do when democracy is ushered in by non-democratic means (Sturman, 2011). In the case of Burkina Faso, plans to prepare for elections towards the end of 2015 was derailed by another coup in September 2015.

Since 2014, elections (some local, some national) have taken place in Guinea-Bissau (whose transition to civilian rule was accompanied by the country’s reacceptance to the AU), Liberia, Niger, Nigeria, Benin, Ivory Coast and Togo (EISA, 2015).

Among these, Nigeria’s 2015 general election proved notable: President Goodluck Jonathan lost to opposition candidate Muhammadu Buhari and promptly stepped down. This has been widely regarded as a major step towards the consolidation of democracy in the regional hegemon. Nigeria changed from being a military regime in 1999. The recent elections were largely peaceful, belying fears of a repeat of the violence that accompanied the 2010 polls. The results were also not as ethnically and religiously polarised as many feared, with Jonathan (Christian, from the south) winning some votes in the Muslim north-eastern states and Buhari (Muslim, from the north) winning the majority in Christian Edo province and in the south-west (a mix Christians and Muslims) (Bello, 2014). Major issues that lost support for the old ruling party include national security concerns (especially in the north-east), the economy (notably a lack of jobs and growing inequality) and erratic electricity supply (Bello, 2014). The old regime was also plagued by perceptions of corruption and wastage. Buhari – a former military head of state and past chairman of the petroleum trust fund – has his work cut out for him.

Upcoming elections in Mali, Burkina Faso, Guinea, Ivory Coast and Niger (EISA, 2015) will serve as critical tests for the region’s political stability. Mali’s elections were postponed from April to October 2015 due to security concerns in the country’s north (Reuters, 2015).

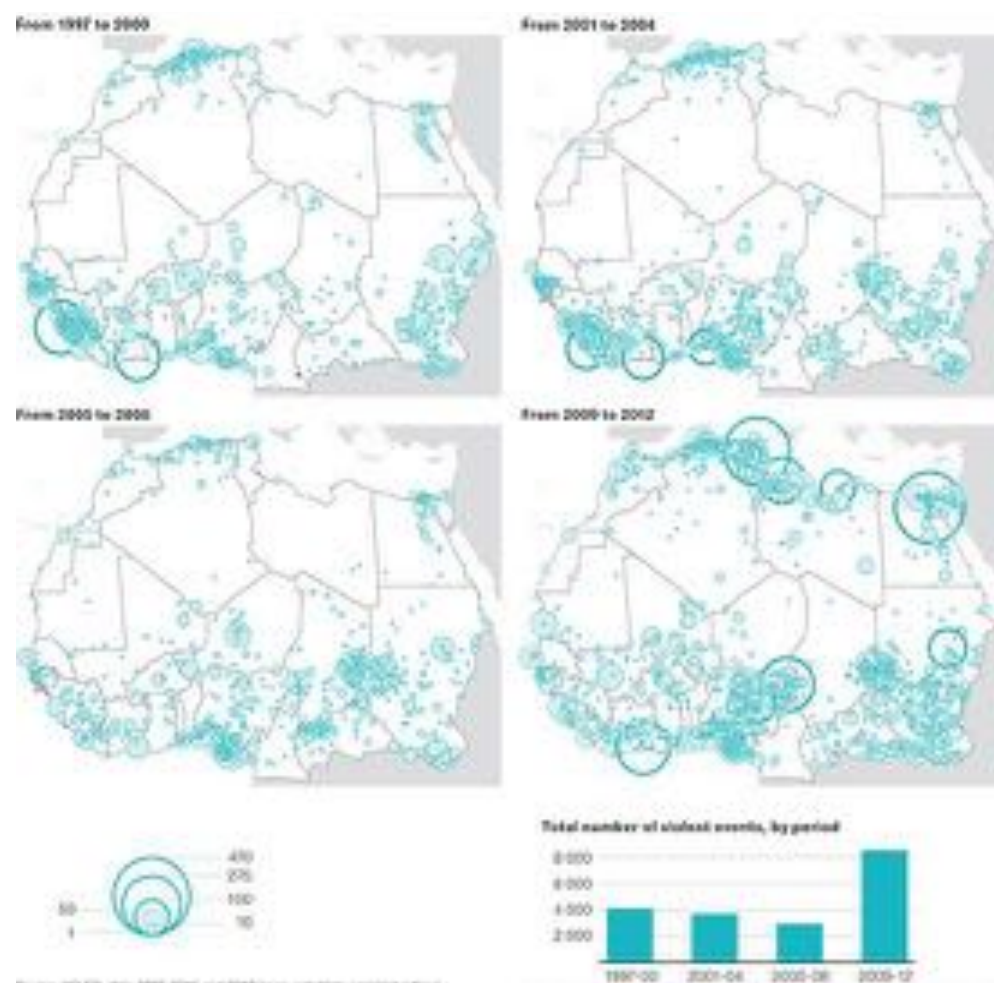
FIGURE 2: SATISFACTION WITH DEMOCRACY

	Total	Benin	Côte d'Ivoire	Burkina Faso	Cape Verde	Ghana	Guinea	Liberia	Mali	Niger
(Country) is not a democracy	1.0	0.2	0.7	0.7	0.9	0.1	3.8	0.6	0.7	0.6
Not at all satisfied	18.1	8.9	27.3	14.7	9.0	5.7	31.8	12.5	36.0	11.6
Not very satisfied	28.7	30.7	36.8	26.9	41.0	19.3	24.4	25.1	30.9	18.3
Fairly satisfied	31.4	40.2	22.7	31.6	23.7	48.7	19.8	28.7	20.8	38.0
Very satisfied	17.8	19.9	7.4	18.3	21.5	25.1	19.2	30.0	10.2	26.8
Missing; Unknown	*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Don't know	2.8	0.1	5.2	8.0	3.9	1.1	1.0	3.1	1.5	4.7
(N)	(17997)	(1200)	(1200)	(1200)	(1208)	(2400)	(1200)	(1199)	(1200)	(1200)

	Nigeria	Senegal	Sierra Leone	Togo
(Country) is not a democracy	1.6	0.5	0.7	3.0
Not at all satisfied	25.2	8.4	11.3	38.0
Not very satisfied	41.2	19.6	24.4	32.0
Fairly satisfied	27.9	46.8	31.8	14.6
Very satisfied	3.8	21.1	29.2	6.4
Missing; Unknown	-	0.1	-	-
Don't know	0.3	3.6	2.7	5.9
(N)	(2400)	(1200)	(1190)	(1200)

Source: Afrobarometer. (2011-2013). Afrobarometer Round 5, custom data extracted from: <http://afrobarometer.org/online-data-analysis> (Accessed 30 July 2015).

Figure 3: Violent events in the Sahel, West and North Africa (1997-2012)



Source: An Atlas of the Sahara-Sahel – Geography, Economics and Security

CURRENT SOURCES OF INSECURITY IN WEST AFRICA

As stated, West Africa’s political journey has not been a smooth one. Across the region examples of instability remain (see Figure 3). A 2013 monograph by the OECD Sahel and West Africa Club (OECD/SWAC, 2013) identified conflict over resources and terrorism as two main facets of insecurity in the region. Resources include land, water and extractives (including oil). Tensions are concentrated in two regions, namely the Sahelian belt and the

TENSIONS ALONG THE SAHEL

The Sahelian belt that runs through the region’s northern parts is a semi-arid land that is largely hostile to human settlement. Many people in that area adopt a nomadic lifestyle. From time-to-time, long-standing tensions between sedentary farmers and nomadic communities spill over into agro-pastoral conflict. Moreover, a nomadic lifestyle conducted far from the nation’s capital often leave inhabitants in far-flung regions on the periphery of government control, but within easy reach of

non-state actors, including transnational criminal networks (Lamptey, 2013). Threats include the trafficking of people, drugs and small arms. Increasing population pressure and climate change act as additional stressors (also see the sections on demographic and environmental trends below). Terrorism also appears to be intensifying across the African continent, with at least 22 African countries targeted (Solomon, 2015).

Some illustrative examples follow:

Rising tensions in Northern Mali came to a head January 2012 in the form of an anti-government insurgency consisting of an uneasy alliance of Touareg nationalist and radical Islamist groups. In March of that year, the president was ousted in a coup. Whereas the Touareg people pushed for an independent homeland (Azawad – a centuries-old idea revived by a renewed sense of economic marginalisation), Islamist groups instead wanted Sharia law to be established in the state as a whole (Solomon, 2015). The OECD/SWAC monograph describes the situation in Northern Mali as an “exploitation of the Touareg rebellion by radical Islamist terrorist groups” – a complex

“PIRACY HAS ALSO DRAWN ATTENTION TO WIDER PROBLEMS RELATED TO MARITIME INSECURITY. THIS INCLUDES THE SMUGGLING OF OIL, WEAPONS AND NARCOTICS, HUMAN TRAFFICKING, AND ILLEGAL AND UNREGULATED FISHING ACTIVITIES.”

challenge with implications not only for Mali, but also for the wider region (OECD/SWAC, 2013). Various rounds of negotiations since 2012 have resulted in numerous peace deals and ceasefires, with limited success (Deutsche Welle, 2015). At the time of writing (August 2015), political stability in Northern Mali remained fragile, with sporadic attacks still occurring.

Boko Haram is an Islamic extremist group based in north-eastern Nigeria, also active in Chad, Niger and northern Cameroon. The group was founded in 2002 with the aim of creating an Islamic caliphate (Sergie & Johnson, 2015). In recent years (since 2009/2010), it has grown increasingly radical and violent. According to Amnesty International, at least 17,000 people (mostly civilians) have been killed by Boko Haram since 2009 (Amnesty International, 2015), with 2014 and 2015 proving the deadliest years to date. Boko Haram claims that it has joined Islamic State and calls itself “West African Province”. At some point, the group seized a large area in north-eastern Nigeria, where it declared a caliphate. Recently, however, most of this territory has been retaken by a regional force (BBC News, 2015). At the time of writing (August 2015), even as the group appeared on the retreat, it was continuing to carry out attacks both in Nigeria and neighbouring countries (BBC News, 2015). Whatever happens to Boko Haram, the group embodies a growing regional security challenge that requires a coordinated regional response. Lessons from the regional response to Boko Haram (The Nation, 2015) could well prove valuable going forward. Some (for instance, Olidapo, 2015) have pointed out that local populations will remain vulnerable to extremist ideology until factors like poverty, unemployment and a lack of education are addressed. For instance, in his recent book titled *Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism in Africa*, Hussein Solomon (2015) argued that historical precedents to Boko Haram go all the way back to 1802. Perceptions of marginalisation and inequality have contributed to the domestic conflicts that have plagued the country since 1945. The fact that poverty levels in the largely Muslim north is much higher than that in the largely Christian south (according to one measure around 72% vs. 27%) has served to reinforce longstanding divisions along religious and ethnic lines. This, combined with perceptions of endemic corruption and the growing affluence of elites since the end of military rule in 1999 has reinforced Boko Haram’s

discourse that the Nigerian state is taghut or evil, especially among the poor (Solomon, 2015).

MARITIME INSECURITY

The Gulf of Guinea is a 6000 km stretch of coastline that runs from Senegal to Angola. This coastline is of great economic import to West Africa. It is a major trading route connecting West Africa to the rest of the world. The route is also used to connect the Far East with the Americas and Europe via the Atlantic – a long way round, but in the past considered safer than the Arab Gulf, Middle East and North Africa. The Gulf is also home to significant hydrocarbon reserves: established oil producers Nigeria and Equatorial Guinea have in recent years been joined by Ghana, Ivory Coast, Sierra Leone, Liberia and Senegal. In addition to oil, the region is home to significant marine resources (Osei-Tutu, 2014).

Unfortunately, the Gulf of Guinea is also home to rising security threats. Piracy, kidnappings and armed robbery at sea have increased along the West Coast of Africa even as it has declined along Somalia’s Gulf of Aden. In 2013, 19% of worldwide piracy attacks took place in West Africa. Most of these (31 out of 51 in West Africa) took place in Nigeria, though pirates have also ventured into the waters of Togo, Ghana and Ivory Coast (Osei-Tutu, 2014). Scholar Christian Bueger argued that the main causes of piracy include corruption, weak law enforcement, poverty and economic marginalisation (Ben-Ari, 2013). Piracy has also drawn attention to wider problems related to maritime insecurity. This includes the smuggling of oil, weapons and narcotics, human trafficking, and illegal and unregulated fishing activities (Ben-Ari, 2013).

Nigeria has expressed strong political will to tackle these challenges. Of note is also a recently validated regional action plan for the ECOWAS integrated maritime strategy (EIMS) that aims to tackle issues related to maritime security in a holistic way. The planned maritime security architecture includes a regional Centre of Maritime Security, based in Abidjan (Ben-Ari, 2013).

Overall, the political and security situation in West Africa can be described as a mix of progress and setbacks: stabilisation in parts, coupled with rising tensions elsewhere.

ECONOMIC TRENDS

ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DIVERSIFICATION

In terms of economic growth on the continent, the West African region is second only to East Africa (see Table 1 below). In 2013, the region's economy (measured in terms of real GDP) grew at a rate of 5.7%. This is also projected to be the average growth rate for the period 2014-2016. Recent figures show that the region reached its projected growth rate in 2014; this despite the Ebola crisis (AfDB/OECD/UNDP, 2015). The region's growth is largely ascribed to greater political stability, high commodity demand coupled with soaring prices, and improved economic policies (AfDB/OECD/UNDP, 2015).

There is significant variation across the region: Sierra Leone's double-digit growth over the period 2011-2014 (reaching as high as 20.1% in 2013) was driven largely by a big iron ore discovery in that country. This rate is projected to slow down significantly over the next few years (AfDB/OECD/UNDP, 2015). The West African country with the second strongest growth over the same period was Gambia. Here growth was driven by the recovery of its agricultural sector following a drought. Liberia was third in line, with growth driven by its mining sector (AfDB, 2013).

Looking forward, Ivory Coast expects growth at an average rate of 8.35% for the period 2013-2016. Other countries where growth is projected to be consistently strong – averaging more than 5% between 2013 and 2016 – include Burkina Faso (6.03%), Benin (5.68%), Nigeria (5.68%), Togo (5.63%) and Ghana (5.33%) (AfDB/OECD/UNDP, 2015). Growth is expected to be somewhat more subdued – averaging less than 3% over the period 2013-2016 – in Guinea (2.03%), Cape Verde (2.35%) and Guinea Bissau (2.78%). Across the region, growth is driven largely by the extractive (mining and oil) and agricultural sectors, but also by services. Growth also follows stability after conflict.

In Africa's largest country – Nigeria – growth accelerated from 5.4% in 2013 to 6.3% in 2014. Notably, this growth was not driven by the oil sector, but by services, manufacturing and agriculture. Its oil and manufacturing sectors are now of a similar size (around 10-11% of GDP) (AfDB/OECD/UNDP, 2015). This is an encouraging sign of diversification in a region in which many countries are still heavily dependent on commodity exports. Such a dependence makes one vulnerable to fluctuations in commodity prices.

Commodity markets are characterised by volatility. This is projected to continue and perhaps even increase. Figure 5 provides a snapshot of the evolution of major commodity prices between 2011 and 2013. The figure below shows the sudden drop in the price of oil between June 2014 and March 2015. While this benefited consumers in oil importing countries that benefited from paying less to heat their homes or drive their cars, it led to significant revenue shortfalls in oil-producing nations, including in West Africa where all countries but Burkina-Faso and Cape Verde are either producing oil or exploring for it. Figure 5 also reflects a drop in all other major commodities over this period.

Diversification is a key strategy that will allow countries to respond to the kind of shocks represented by the figures above. The African Economic Outlook for 2015 (AfDB/OECD/UNDP, 2015) stresses the importance of structural transformation and identifies four different profiles of structural transformation, based on the pace at which countries diversified from agriculture between 1961 and 2010:

The countries that diversified the most are characterised by higher rates of urbanisation, an exit from the agricultural sector and industrial development. Ivory Coast provides a West African example of such a “diversifier”. Predominantly rural Mali is an example of an agriculturally-based economy. Ghana, Senegal and Togo correspond to an “intermediate” category, with smaller agricultural sectors. A fourth profile is described as “agriculture plus”. In these countries, the share of agriculture increased. This includes countries undergoing crisis where the agricultural sector provided a refuge from an economic downturn (e.g. at different times during the period under consideration Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Sierra Leone) as well as those with a booming agricultural sector (e.g. Burkina Faso since its so-called “cotton revolution”) (AfDB/OECD/UNDP, 2015).

Overall, the agricultural sector remains crucial to the region: around 65% of the West African population depend primarily on agriculture and it accounts for up to 35% of the region's GDP (AfDB, 2014b). Note that, though diversification is generally a positive thing, this does not mean that a strong agriculture or extractives sector is necessarily bad. The African Economic Outlook (AfDB/OECD/UNDP, 2015) emphasises the need to take into account heterogeneities and specificities of each state. In terms of foreign investment inflows to the region, though the extractive sector still dominates, the share of the sector is shrinking in favour of investments in infrastructure (including construction, transportation, electricity and water). This is good news, considering that the lack of infrastructure serves as a serious constraint to growth in the region (also see the section on infrastructure below). For a summary of trading partners and investment flows see figure 7.

INFRASTRUCTURE

The African Development Bank's Africa Infrastructure Development Index (AIDI) monitors the state of infrastructure on the continent. The AIDI includes transport, electricity, ICT, water and sanitation. An overview of AIDI scores since 2000 shows West, East and Central Africa lagging behind Southern and North Africa (see Figure 8).

This section will focus on transport infrastructure. For electricity and ICT, see the technological trends section. Water and sanitation is subsumed under the social and demographic trends section that follows.

Ground transport is most important means of transport in West Africa, providing access for over 70% of the region's rural population. A special issue of the AfDB publication West Africa Monitor focusing on infrastructure describes the West African road network as “relatively coherent and far-reaching”, though requiring maintenance in places (AfDB, 2014). It also explains

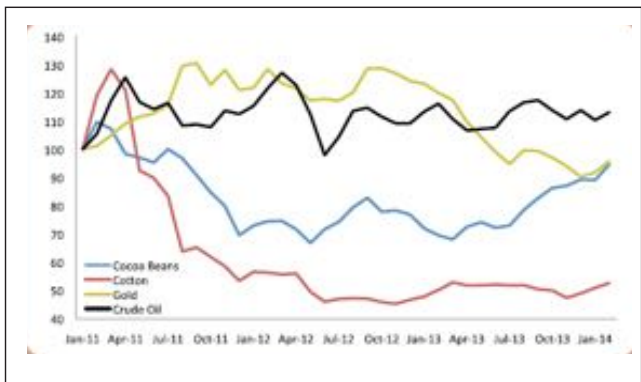
Figure 4: Africa's growth by region 2013-16

	2013	2014 (e)	2015 (p)	2016 (p)
Africa	3.5	3.9	4.5	5.0
Central Africa	4.1	5.6	5.5	5.8
East Africa	4.7	7.1	5.6	6.7
North Africa	1.6	1.7	4.5	4.4
West Africa	5.7	6.0	5.0	6.1
MEMORANDUM ITEMS				
Africa excl. Libya	4.0	4.3	4.3	5.0
Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA)	4.7	5.2	4.6	5.4
SSA excl. South Africa	5.4	6.2	5.2	6.2

NOTE: (e) estimates; (p) projections.

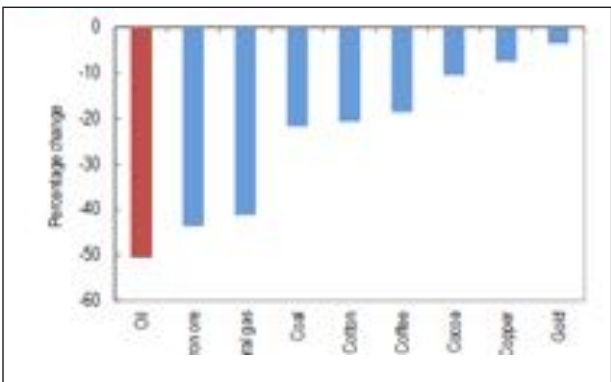
Source: African Economic Outlook, 2015. p. ii.

Figure 5: Evolution of commodities prices
– January 2011 = 100



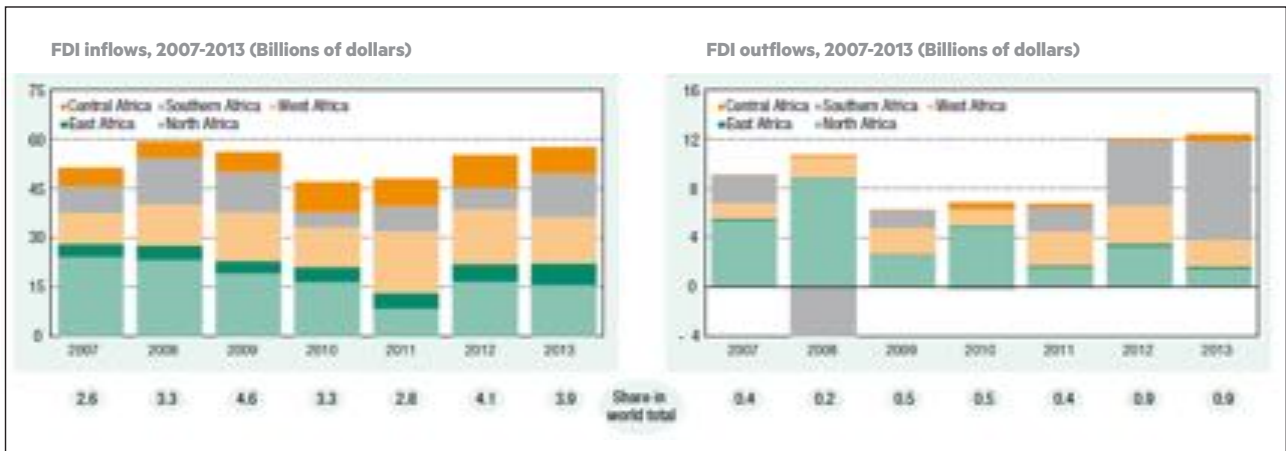
Source: West Africa Monitor, date?

Figure 6: Selected commodity prices. Change from
June 2014 - March 25, 2015



Source: IMF Economic Outlook for sub-Saharan Africa, April 2015.

Figure 7



Source: UNCTAD World Investment Report, 2014, p.

that the quality of road infrastructure differs across the region, with Cape Verde, Ghana and Burkina Faso leading the way. The region's flagship road infrastructure project is the Trans-West African Highway that, once completed, will link 11 ECOWAS countries from Nigeria to Senegal (AfDB, 2014).

The railway sector remains underdeveloped. Railways are largely perpendicular to the coast and disconnected from one another. The railways that exist are used largely to export minerals. Plans are underway for a sub-regional network that will connect the capitals of Benin, Niger, Burkina Faso and Ivory Coast (AfDB, 2014).

West Africa shares a lot of watercourses. For instance, Guinea has 14 transboundary basins, Ivory Coast 8, Liberia 7 and Nigeria and Sierra Leone 5 each. This necessitates regional cooperation. There are also a number of ports in the region, including Abidjan (Africa's second largest port), Dakar, Tiema, Cotonou and Lomé (AfDB, 2014).

West Africa took the lead on freeing air travel on the continent with a regional treaty in 1993. Countries in the region are currently investing a large amount in airport development to meet an increase in traffic (AfDB, 2014).

The fact that transport infrastructure remains a constraint to doing business in the region is reflected in the World Bank Ease of Doing Business rankings (World Bank, 2014): exporting a container from Timor L'este (ranked #1 on this score in the index) costs on average \$410, compared to \$4475 for a container from Niger. Across the ECOWAS region, the average cost of exporting a container is \$1558. The time it takes tells a similar story, with the average time to export a container from Niger being 56 days, compared to 6 days in the leading countries. The regional average is just over 26 days.

REGIONAL INTEGRATION

Regional economic integration in West Africa dates back to 1945 and the creation of the CFA franc. The franc brought the francophone countries of the region into a single currency union. In 1964 – in the wake of rapid decolonisation of the region – the President of Liberia suggested an economic union. Apart from the signing of an agreement by Ivory Coast, Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, nothing much happened until 1972, when the Nigerian and Togolese heads of state toured the region to garner support for the project of integration. This lay the groundwork for the Treaty of Lagos and the birth of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in 1975. The initial idea was to limit integration to economic policies. This scope was expanded in 1993 to include both interstate economic and political cooperation (ECOWAS).

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SOCIAL AND DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

A very broad overview of human development will be followed by a discussion of demographic trends.

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT IN WEST AFRICA

The UNDP Human Development Index (HDI) is a composite index used to rank countries in four tiers of human development, based on indicators related to life expectancy, education and per capita income. Africa presents significant variation on the index: in 2014, 5 African countries (including Libya and Mauritius) ranked as having high levels of human development, 12 as medium and 35 as low (UNDP, 2014). No African countries ranked as having very high levels of development. Figure 4.1 below shows a steady improvement in West Africa's HDI score over time, with the biggest improvements in Benin, Liberia, Mali, Niger and Sierra Leone (AfDB/OECD/UNDP, 2015). However, this is from a very low base. In the 2013/2014 HDI (UNDP, 2014), 12 out of 15 of the ECOWAS countries ranked low on human development, with Niger ranked as lowest in Africa (52/52) and the world (187/187). The West African country with the best ranking is Cape Verde: 10th in Africa and 123rd in the world.

Another way to track development is the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). 2015 is the deadline year for these goals, which in September 2000 rallied the world around a common 15-year agenda to tackle poverty. The 8 MDGs are: 1) eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; 2) achieve universal primary education; 3) promote gender equality and empower women; 4) reduce child mortality; 5) improve maternal health; 6) combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; 7) ensure environmental sustainability; and 8) develop a global partnership for development.

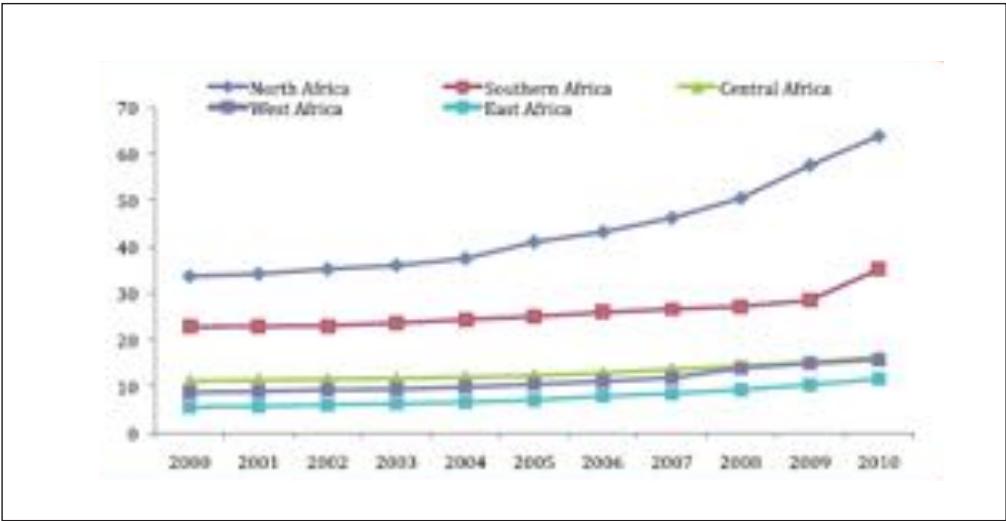
In 2010, UN magazine Africa Renewal highlighted the following examples of progress towards the achievement of the MDGs in West Africa:

Goal 1: Over the period 2001 – 2007, Nigeria doubled its food production, while in Ghana, the number of people who suffer from undernourishment fell by 74% between 1991 and 2004; Goal 4: Between 1990 and 2008, child mortality declined by 25% in Equatorial Guinea, while in Niger, absolute reductions of more than 100 for every 1000 live births since 1990; Goal 5: Between 1990 and 2009, there was an increase of more than 20 percentage points in skilled birth attendance; Goal 7: From 1990 to 2006, rural access to drinking water in Ghana increased by 43%, to 80%. In Mali, the percentage of the population with at least one point of access to improved sanitation rose by 10% (from 35%-45%) between 1990 and 2006. By the same year, 93% of urban Senegalese had access to improved water quality.

These statistics reflect very real differences in the lives of people. Nevertheless, high levels of poverty and inequality indicate that there is still a long way to go.

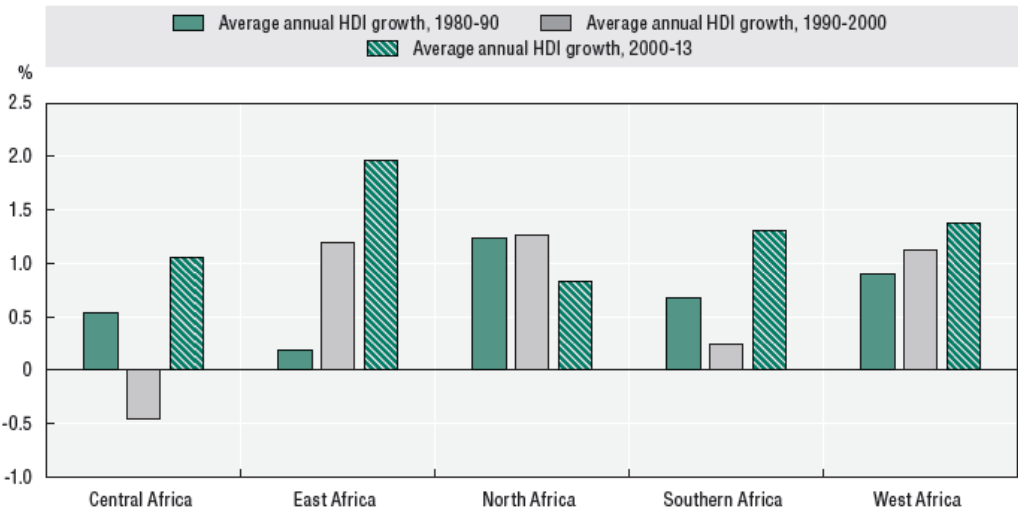
On a global level, the MDGs have been followed by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). African countries have been actively involved in formulating these goals as well as the

Figure 8: AiDI Sub-regional scores, 2000-2010



Source: AfDB

Figure 9: Change in human development by Africa's regions, 1980-2013



Source: UNDP

Figure 10: Average annual population growth rate

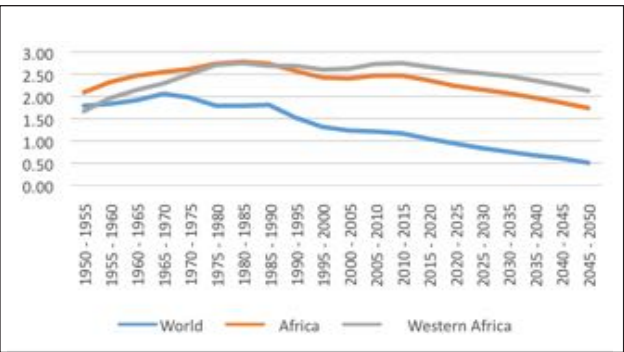
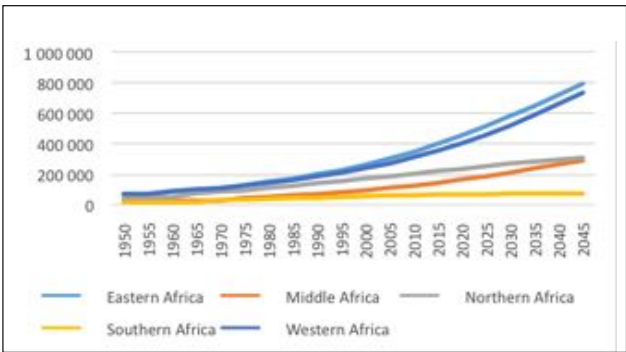


Figure 11: Population growth Africa



Source: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2014). World Urbanization Prospects: The 2014 Revision, custom data acquired via website (<http://esa.un.org/unpd/wup/>, accessed 6 August 2015).

guiding framework for the next 15 years, known as the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

Between 2010 and 2015, the annual global population growth rate was projected to stand at 1.1%. Africa's annual population growth rate stood at 2.5% and that of West Africa at 2.7% (United Nations, 2013). West Africa is the second fastest growing region in Africa. By 2030, Africa's population growth rate is expected to slow to about 2%, with that of West Africa still higher than the African average at around 2.5%. Africa's population growth rate will remain much higher than the world average through to 2050. This means that Africans (including West Africans) are set to constitute an increasing proportion of the world's population. By way of illustration, the population of Nigeria is projected to overtake that of the US by 2045 (Boesler, 2013). Also see Figures 10 - 12.

YOUNG AND OLD

The fast growth in West Africa's population is resulting in a youth bulge. Currently about 40% of the population is under 15 years of age and nearly 70% under 30 (AfDB, 2014). This brings both opportunities and challenges. On the one hand, there is the potential for a demographic dividend as the ratio of working-age population to the inactive population improves. However, realising this potential requires the ability to absorb this cohort of working-age people into the workforce. To date, this has not happened. The problem of unemployed or under-employed youth is compounded in post-conflict countries like Liberia, Sierra Leone or Ivory Coast, where many young people are also ex-combatants (AfDB, 2014). High rates of poverty and inequality further point to the fact that much of the region's growth has not been inclusive. Recent protests and strikes – including in Liberia, Benin and Burkina Faso (AfDB, 2014) – provide glimpses of the instability this situation could engender. This underscores the urgency of focusing on education and job creation.

Interestingly, as life expectancy increases, the growth in youth is accompanied by a growing aging population (Mubila, 2012). For a summary of these trends across the continent as a whole, see figure 13.

URBANISATION

Since the 1950s, urban growth rates in West Africa have been consistently higher than the region's overall population growth rate. For instance, while the overall population growth rate for West Africa stood at 2.7% between 2010 and 2015, the urban population grew at over 4% (see Figure 14). This urbanisation trend is projected to continue, albeit at a slower rate than the 1950s-1970s.

Urbanisation is the result not only of demographic growth in cities, but also of migration. Migration to urban centres is the result of a combination of push and pull factors. Pull factors include the search for economic opportunities and higher standards of living. The African Economic Outlook (2015) makes the point that the slowdown in the urban growth rate during the economic crisis in the 1980s and 1990s raises the question of urban attractiveness in a context of underemployment and low job creation (AfDB/OECD/

UNDP, 2015). As populations grow, natural resources of already densely populated areas will come under pressure, leading people to migrate either to urban areas or have the counter trend as result, of migration to less populated areas. Climate change and extreme weather events also play a role in migration. Migration happens both within and between countries.

Another form of urbanisation entails the growing of settlements, with villages becoming rural centres and then small towns. The African Economic Outlook (AfDB/OECD/UNDP, 2015) points out that in East and West Africa in particular, the number of small towns (less than 50 000 people) has grown sharply since the 1960s. The report also points to the relative stagnation of medium-sized cities (between 200 000 and 1 million people) – a development that it regards as regrettable.

The report also points out that even as Africa's cities will grow fast, so will its rural communities. Despite strong urbanisation rates in areas (e.g. along the Gulf of Guinea), large parts of Africa's population, including in West Africa, is projected to remain rural until the mid-2030s (AfDB/OECD/UNDP, 2015). This is in contrast to the rest of the world.

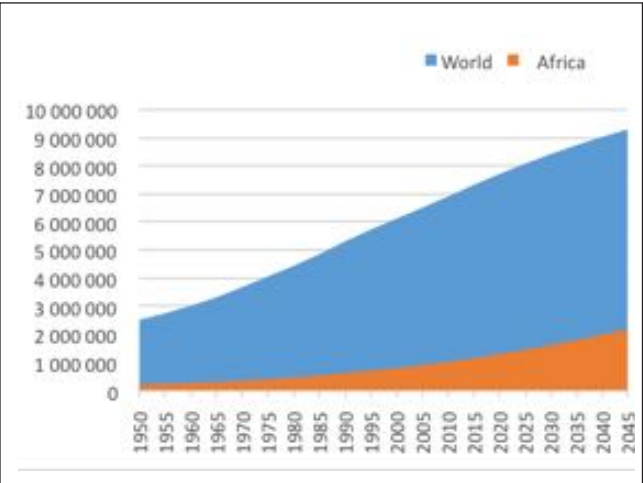
RELIGIOUS DEMOGRAPHY

Today, over 85% of people in sub-Saharan Africa would identify themselves as either Christian (57%) or Muslim (29%). This is in stark contrast with the situation a century ago when no more than a quarter of the population of sub-Saharan Africa identified as either of the two groups (Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, 2010). At that time, more than three-quarters (76%) identified traditional African religion as their primary belief system. These changes are depicted in figure 16.

West Africa is the only region in sub-Saharan Africa where Islam is in the majority. According to World Christian Database figures (Association of Religion Data Archives), in 2010 51% of people in West Africa identified as Muslims and 36.5% as Christians. Traditional African belief systems account for 12.1% of the population, with adherents to other religions (including Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism) accounting for less than 0.1%. Only 0.3% of people in West Africa describe themselves as agnostic, and less than 0.1% as atheist (Association of Religion Data Archives).

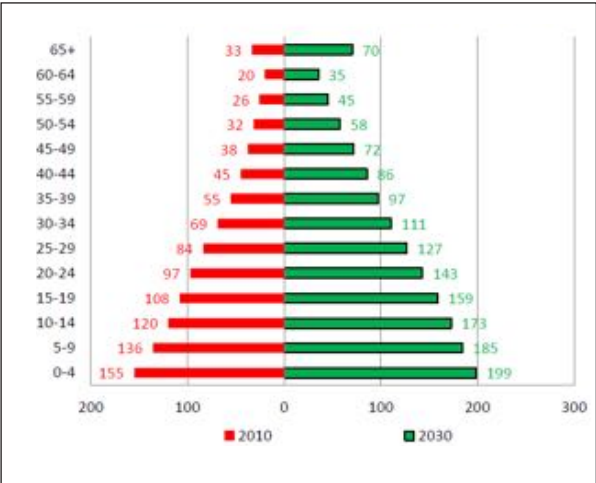
Overall, Africans hold their beliefs dear. Unlike in Europe or the United States, very few people in sub-Saharan Africa are unaffiliated with a particular faith. For instance, a 2010 survey on religious beliefs in sub-Saharan Africa by the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life found that 97% of people in the region believe in God. In fact, the survey found the sub-continent to be among the most religious regions in the world, with the vast majority of people (in many countries over 90%) rating religion as playing a very important role in their lives. A sizeable majority of Muslims in the region describe themselves either as Sunni or as without a specific affiliation ("just a Muslim") and very few as Shia. Of the Christians, around one-third identify as Catholics and two-thirds as Protestant (different denominations), Pentecostal or

Figure 12: Population growth Africa vs. the world



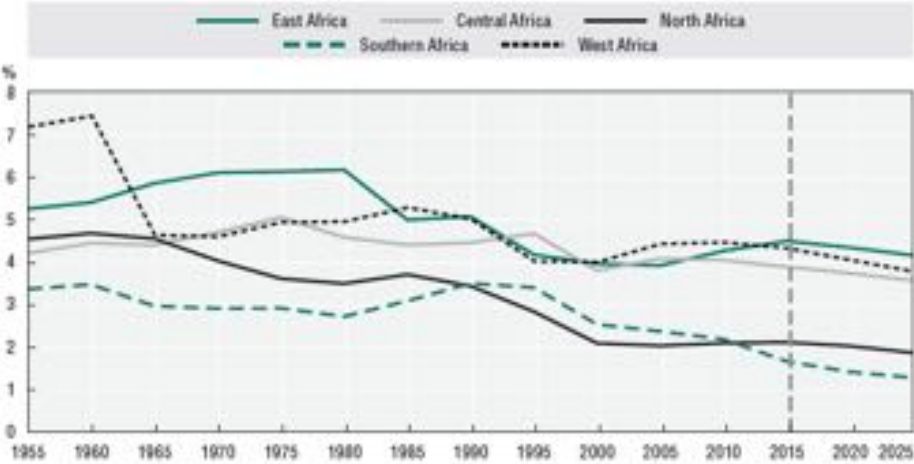
Source: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2014). World Urbanization Prospects: The 2014 Revision, custom data acquired via website (<http://esa.un.org/unpd/wup/>, accessed 6 August 2015).

Figure 13: Africa population by age group 2010 and 2030



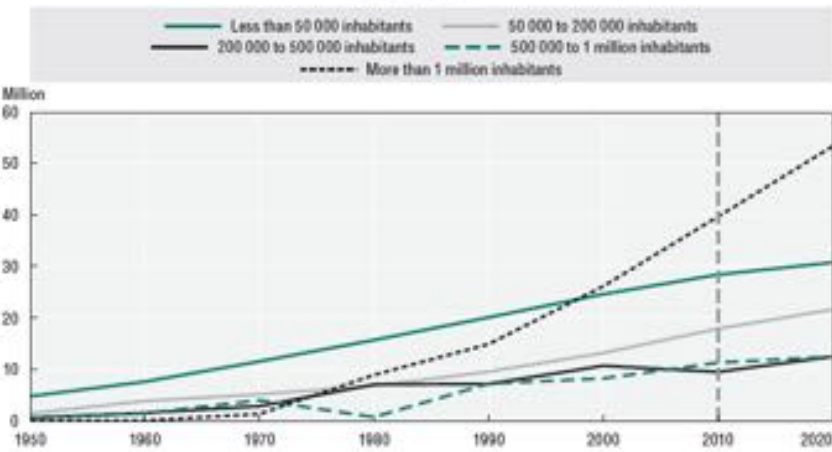
Source: AfDB based on UN population division data

Figure 14: Urban growth rate in Africa, 1950-2025



NOTE: The percentages reflect the average annual rate of change of the urban population over five-year periods
Source: UNDESA (2014)

Figure 15: Urban population by sizes of cities and towns in West Africa 1950-2020



NOTE: The data covers 16 countries from West Africa
Source: AFD et al. (2009) and Umberson (2013)

Figure 16: Growth of Islam & Christianity in Sub-Saharan Africa since 1900

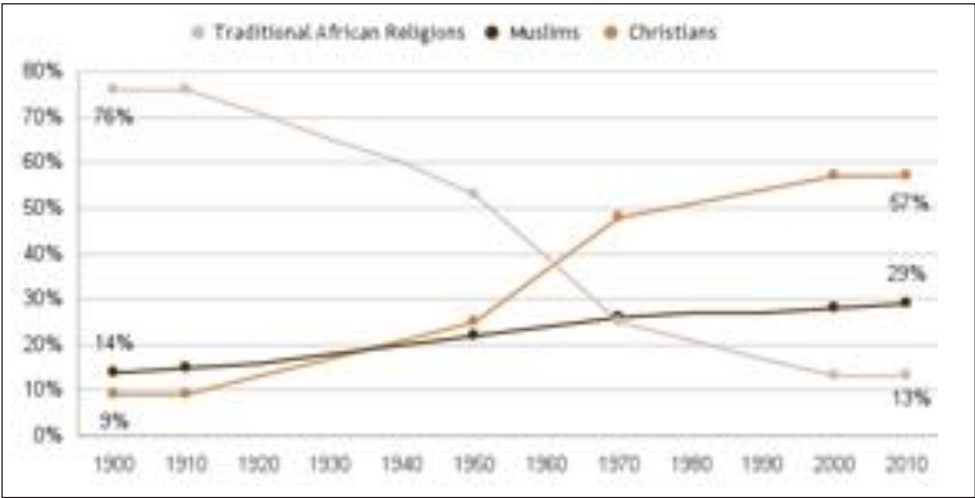
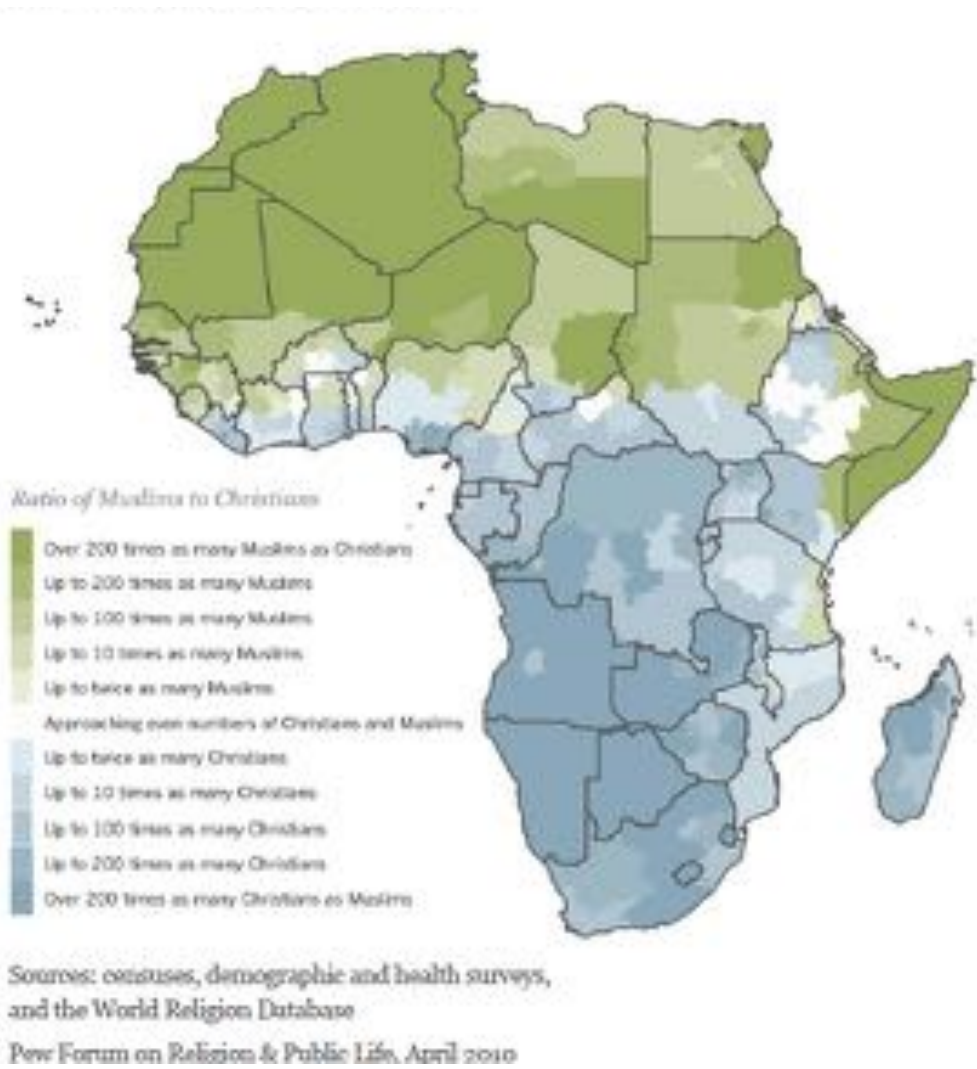


Figure 17: Muslims and Christians in Africa. This map shows the ration of Muslims to Christians in each country and province. The north is heavily Muslim, and the south is heavily Christian



Evangelical (custom data extracted from Afrobarometer R5, 2011-2013). Of particular interest is the rise of Pentecostalism. The graph below (Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, 2010) illustrates the popularity of Pentecostalism in Nigeria, Liberia and Ghana (as found in the Pew survey and also confirmed in the Afrobarometer survey), where around a quarter of the Christians belong to Pentecostal churches. These churches emphasise gifts of the Holy Spirit including speaking in tongues and prophesying.

The Pew study (2010) notes that “[many] believers (both Christian and Muslim) in sub-Saharan Africa experience their respective faiths in a very intense, immediate and personal way”. For instance, at least half of Christians in African countries with a substantial Christian population expect that Jesus will return to Earth during their lifetime, while roughly 30% of Muslims in countries with a substantial Muslim population expect to personally witness the reestablishment of the caliphate (the golden age of Islamic rule following Mohammad’s death) (Pew, 2010). It goes on to point out that intense religious experiences – including exorcisms and divine healings – are also found in traditional African religions. The

study furthermore found that, though such experiences are often associated with Pentecostalism, they were reported commonly also among African Christians unaffiliated with Pentecostal churches.

Nigeria is home to both the biggest Christian and Muslim populations in the region (in 2010 around 78 million and 77.3 million respectively) (custom data extracted from Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, 2010). When it comes to religion, the country is in some ways a microcosm of the region. Projected future trends also provide a glimpse into the shifting religious demography in the region. In 2010, Nigerian Christians and Muslims were divided in roughly equal proportions (custom data extracted from Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, 2010). This is projected to change in the coming decades, as the Muslim population outgrows the Christian one. By 2050, the Pew Forum study expects the proportion of Christians in Nigeria to shrink to around 39.3% of the population, while the Muslim population is expected to grow to 58.5% (Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, 2010). In terms of numbers, this amounts to around 155 million Christians and 231 million Muslims.

Figure 18: Affiliation of Protestants as a percentage of Christians

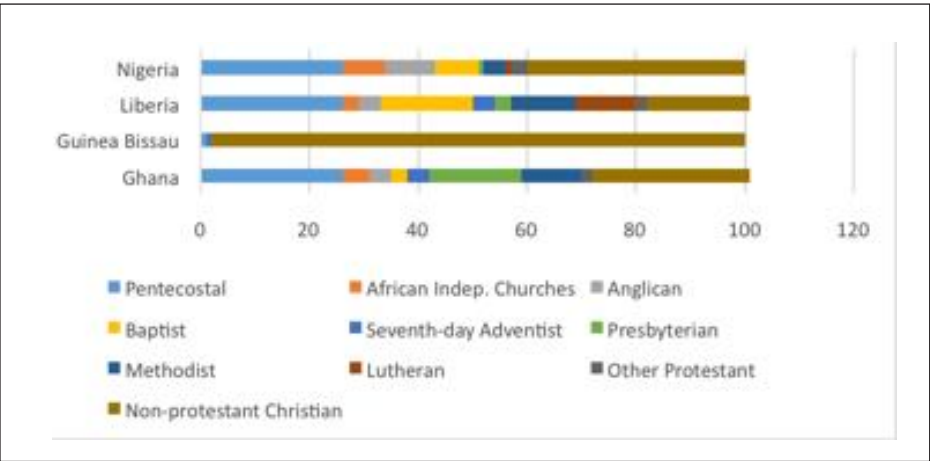


Figure 19

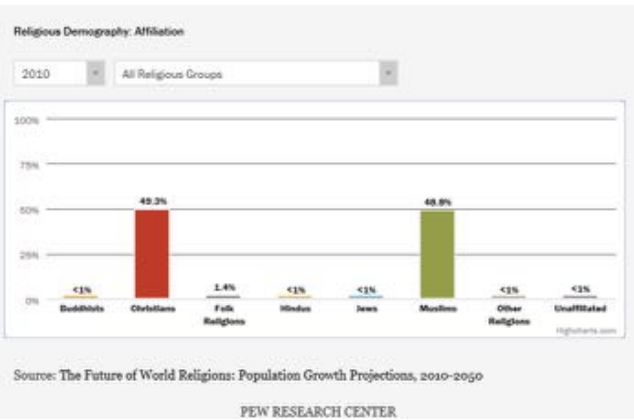
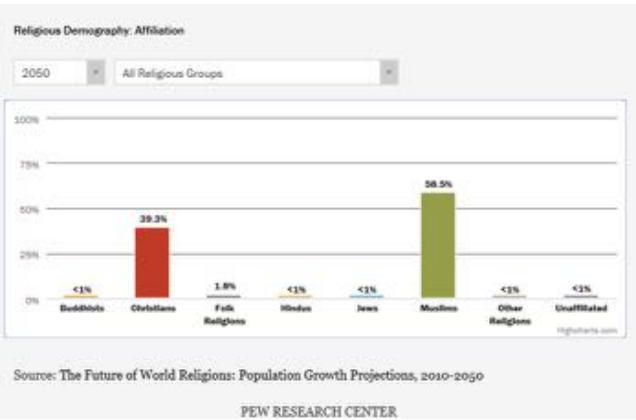


Figure 20



TECHNOLOGICAL TRENDS

This section will focus on energy and information and communication technology (ICT) in West Africa.

ENERGY

Level of access to electricity in West Africa is among the lowest in the world. 57% of people in the region do not have access to electricity, compared to 23% in the developing world and 18% globally (AfDB, 2014). That said, significant variation in the region needs to be noted; this both between countries and in-country, between people in urban and rural areas (see figure 21). Power is also expensive to produce: at an average of 18 US cents per kilowatt-hour, around twice as expensive as the rest of the world. Many people also rely on generators, usually as a back-up supply. This is even more expensive, at 40 US cents per kilowatt-hour (AfDB, 2014).

Reasons for low electricity supply and high costs include a lack of power plants, coupled with geographic constraints resulting in high distribution costs and inadequate network infrastructure (AfDB, 2014). Around 80% of households rely on biomass energy (charcoal and wood fuel) as their primary source of energy. Low access to energy is a significant constraint to development that, if addressed, will contribute significantly to improving both the quality of lives of West African citizens as well as the investment climate.

At first glance, it may seem ironic that a region so rich in hydrocarbons can be so poor in energy. The region is home to both established and new oil producers. See figure 22 for a summary. Apart from Burkina Faso and Cape Verde, all other countries in the region are engaged in petroleum exploration. Almost all of the oil exploited in the region is exported. As discussed in the economic section above, this contributes a significant proportion of the region's GDP. Oil may be abundant, but it is an expensive source of electricity. Gas may prove an option for domestic energy supply. At least three countries in the region have proven gas reserves, with Nigeria's proving particularly notable (AfDB, 2014).

The expansion of renewable energy in the region also holds great potential. This includes hydropower, solar, wind and modern biomass (AfDB, 2014). In addition to addressing energy shortages in the region, renewable energy could also contribute to climate change mitigation.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

MEDIA

Survey data from the 5th Round of Afrobarometer surveys reveal that radio is the main source of news for most West Africans. Close to 75% of West Africans surveyed listen to the news on the radio at least a few times a week (custom data from Afrobarometer R5, 2011-2013). This is fairly consistent across the region. Only 13.7% of those surveyed never listen to the news on the radio.

Radio is followed by television. Between 45-50% of West Africans get their news from the TV at least a few times a week. This varies across the region, with the highest rates coming from Cape Verde (87.6% either every day or a few times a week), Senegal (64.7%) and Ghana (61.1%).

Third in line, but quite far behind radio and TV are newspapers. Only 13.1% of West Africans surveyed get news from newspapers at least a few times a week and 71.8% never. Of the four news sources asked about, the internet ranks last. More than 80% never get news from the internet – probably not having access to the internet – while only about 10% get news from the internet at least a few times a week.

MOBILE CONNECTIVITY

Mobile connectivity has really taken off in West Africa. According to Afrobarometer, 85% of West Africans surveyed during the 5th round (2011-2013) report using cell phones, 68.7% at least once per day. Only 14% report never using a cell phone (custom data from Afrobarometer R5, 2011-2013). Cell phone subscriptions have increased on average 33% a year between 2001 and 2015. In terms of unique subscriptions, Mali leads the region (68/100 people in 2014) and Niger tails (19/100 people in 2014) (AfDB, 2015a). For a summary, see figure 23.

In addition to improving person-to-person communication among people in the region and beyond, mobile connectivity allows for the development of potentially revolutionary technologies. For instance, mobile payment and mobile banking can allow the region to leapfrog the “bricks and mortar” banking of the industrialised world (AfDB, 2015a). Once they realised the potential of mobile connectivity, regional institutions in West Africa – including ECOWAS, the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA) and the Telecommunications Regulator's Assembly – jumped to introduce enabling regulatory frameworks (AfDB, 2015a). By enhancing financial inclusion (notably also among the poor and in rural areas), mobile banking can also contribute to formalising trade, 80% of which is done in cash (AfDB, 2015a). A practical example of benefits that such a system could provide relates to remittances: in 2012 alone, intra-regional migrant remittances reached more than USD 24 billion. In 2013, Nigeria alone was estimated to have received over USD 22 billion in remittances, amounting to about 5.5% of GDP. This can be compared with USD 17 billion in portfolio inflows. For the most part, international transfers are done via intermediaries (Western Union, Money Gram, etc.). Not only is this very expensive (transfer fees between Ghana and Nigeria could reach 27.8% of money transferred), it can also be subject to days-long delays (AfDB, 2015a). Mobile financial services could transform the way remittances flow.

A special edition of the West Africa Monitor – a publication of the African Development Bank (AfDB) – argues that “the mobile payment boom could be the preliminary stage of a larger scale banking and financial system”, offering opportunities in a number of economic and social sectors and even contributing to improved governance (AfDB, 2015a).

INTERNET

Internet connectivity in the region still lags far behind mobile connectivity. According to Round 5 of the Afrobarometer survey, 81.2% of West African respondents say that they never use the internet (custom data from Afrobarometer R5, 2011-2013). However, it is growing: between 2001 and 2013 internet usage in the region grew at an average of 44% per year. This growth is spread very unevenly across the region, with countries like Nigeria and Cape Verde leading and Guinea,

Figure 21: Electricity access rates in West Africa, 2011

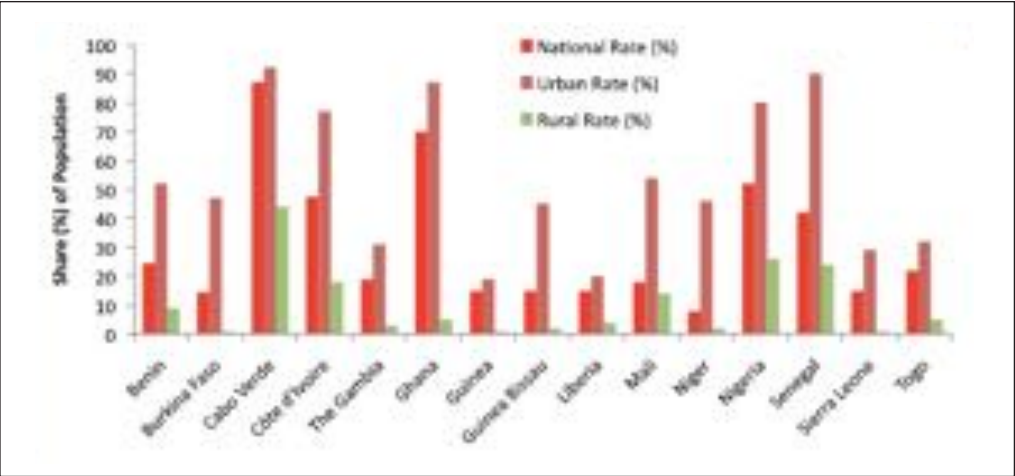


Figure 22: West Africa main oil producers

Country	Global Rank, 2012 (out of 103)	Production, 2000 ('000 barrels/day)	Production, 2012 ('000 barrels/day)	Proven reserves, 2012 (million barrels)	Consumption, 2012 ('000 barrels/day)
Nigeria	13	2109.35	2524.1	37200	269.9
Ghana	54	7.13	79.6	660	63.9
Cote d'Ivoire	62	12.37	38.6	250	23.6
Benin	-	0.69	NA/0	8	18
Niger	-	0	20	650*	5.7

Figure 23: Mobile telephony penetration (number of unique subscribers per 100 inhabitants)

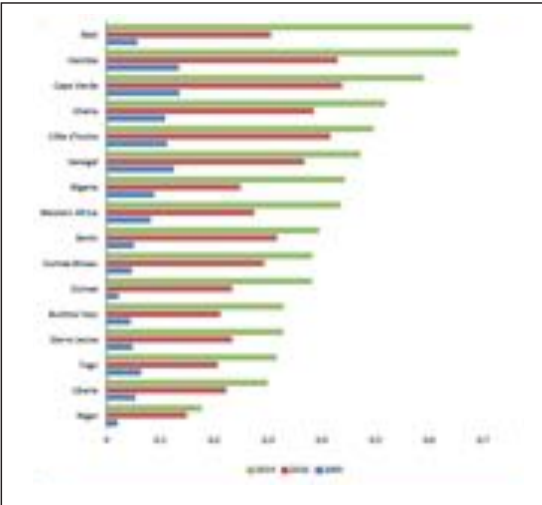
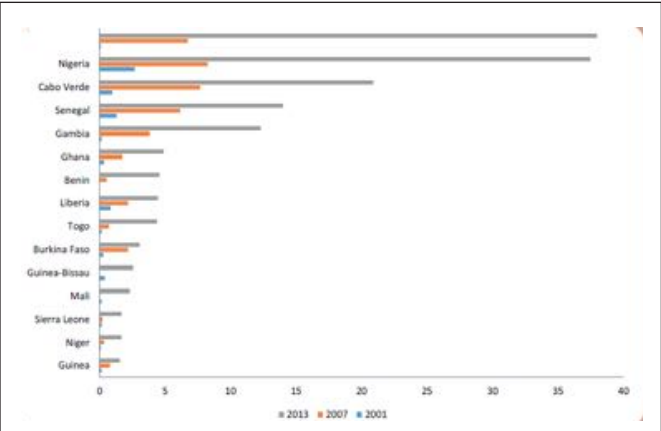


Figure 24: Number of internet users (%)



Source: AFDB

Source: GSMA intelligence

Niger, Mali and Sierra Leone lagging (AfDB, 2015a). See figure 24 below for details. As internet connectivity grows, and cost of data reduces, so too does the adoption of smart phones connected to broadband. Current low rates of internet connectivity is one of the factors hampering the potential of mobile banking.

ENVIRONMENTAL TRENDS

WEST AFRICAN CLIMATE AND WEATHER

West Africa straddles very diverse ecological zones: to its north lies the Sahara and to the south, the tropics. The semi-arid Sahel region that serves to divide North Africa from sub-Saharan Africa cuts through West Africa. The region therefore includes part of the Sahel, as well as sub-tropical and tropical areas, sometimes in one country. It is also a region familiar with climate variability. For instance, a wet period from 1930 – 1960, was followed by droughts from 1970 – 1980s and a return of rainfall in the 1990s and 2000s (ECOWAS-SWAC/OECD, 2008). From year-to-year, the length of the rainy season could vary by more than 30%. The Sahel is particularly vulnerable: rainfall across this belt has been known to vary by more than 1 000 mm over a distance of 750 km. It is also a transition zone that runs the risk of “tipping over” into a desert.

In terms of rainfall, the 3-4 decades from 1960 onwards have seen a substantial reduction across the region and particularly in the Sahel. This has been accompanied by a substantial drop in the stream flows of major rivers in the region. These reductions have been relatively greater than the drop in rainfall, due in part to an increase in water demand linked to population growth. The construction of dams for irrigation and hydroelectric projects has contributed to rising tensions among countries sharing river basins (ECOWAS-SWAC/OECD, 2008). That said, the region is not faced with a short-term water shortage threat. Nevertheless, prudent management of resources at the regional level remain essential. Looking ahead, and confirming the challenges of predictions mentioned above, the map (figure 26) shows two different scenarios for changes in precipitation between 2000 and 2050.

CLIMATE CHANGE IN WEST AFRICA

Currently, West Africa's greenhouse gas emissions are among the lowest in the world. This is largely due to its low energy consumption. The emissions that do exist are due largely to land-use change and deforestation. High rates of deforestation threaten the climate change mitigation potential of the region's forests. The largest contributor to deforestation is the use of biomass for energy: 80% of energy in the region comes from wood fuel and charcoal (ECOWAS-SWAC/OECD, 2008). These trends are projected to change, as population growth and development lead to increasing demand for energy. Decisions around energy supply increasingly will need to consider issues related to climate change and sustainability. So for instance, the region has great potential for renewable energy (hydroelectric, solar and wind) as well as substantial hydrocarbon reserves.

Despite the fact that the continent contributes the least to climate change, climate models forecast that global warming

in the 21st century will be more intense in Africa than in the rest of the world. Between 1980/99 and 2080/99, the average rise in temperature for the continent as a whole is predicted to be between 3 and 4 degrees Celsius (ECOWAS-SWAC/OECD, 2008). That said, these models have proven very limited in predicting the specific changes in West Africa. Most likely, in West Africa as in other regions with high rainfall variability, climate change is likely to increase the seriousness of floods and droughts.

In addition to the Sahel, West Africa's coastal regions will feel the impact of extreme weather events and rising sea levels. Coastal areas are the most densely populated parts of the region. The map (figure 28) details major cities situated along the coast. From Douala to Dakar, there are 12 cities of over 1 million inhabitants. By way of example, in the absence of policies on adaptation, a sea level rise of 0.5 m by 2100 could amount to infrastructural damage to the sum of USD 4.7 billion (25% of its current GDP) in Ivory Coast and USD 9 billion (10% of its current GDP) in Nigeria. In addition to infrastructural damage, valuable ecosystems that stand to be damaged include mangrove swamps, deltas and estuaries. These contribute significantly to the fishing, farming and tourism sectors in the region (ECOWAS-SWAC/OECD, 2008).

AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY

Food production in West Africa has struggled to keep up with population growth. Increasing food imports have impacted negatively on the region's food sovereignty. Not only is agriculture central to food security in West Africa, it is also vital to livelihoods, employing around 60% of the workforce and accounting for 35% of the region's GDP (Jalloh et al., 2013). Most of the region's farmers are smallholders who rely on rain-fed agriculture. Challenges range from irregular rainfall and degraded soil to poor access to inputs. Moreover, in West Africa, agriculture is tied intricately to the climate and weather dynamics described above.

Climate-related impacts vary according to the region and crop. For instance, while the average yield of millet and sorghum – staples in the Sahel region – is projected to fall by 15-25% in Burkina Faso and Niger by 2080, rice yield is projected to increase (ECOWAS-SWAC/OECD, 2008). Livestock farming – including migratory pastoralism – plays a role across the Sahel, contributing up to 10-15% of the GDP in Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Senegal. Sporadic eruptions of tensions between sedentary farmers and nomadic cattle herders have been mentioned earlier. Increased population and environmental pressures have also precipitated changes in farming techniques. The most notable of these have been agro-pastoralism and agroforestry, referring respectively to the combination of farming and livestock, and farming and forestry. These and other sustainable land management (SLM) practices have contributed to an African success story in the form of a mosaic of SLM practices across the Sahel that became known as the Great Green Wall of the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative (GGWSSI). One of the best-known cases is that of Niger, where a practice called farmer-managed natural regeneration (FMNR) has led to the restoration of vast tracts of land (FMNR Hub). Lessons in dryland farming and ecosystem restoration have since spread from the Sahel to other parts of Africa (notably East Africa) and beyond.

Figure 25: Africa's climatic zones



Figure 27: Conceivable Overview of climate change in Africa

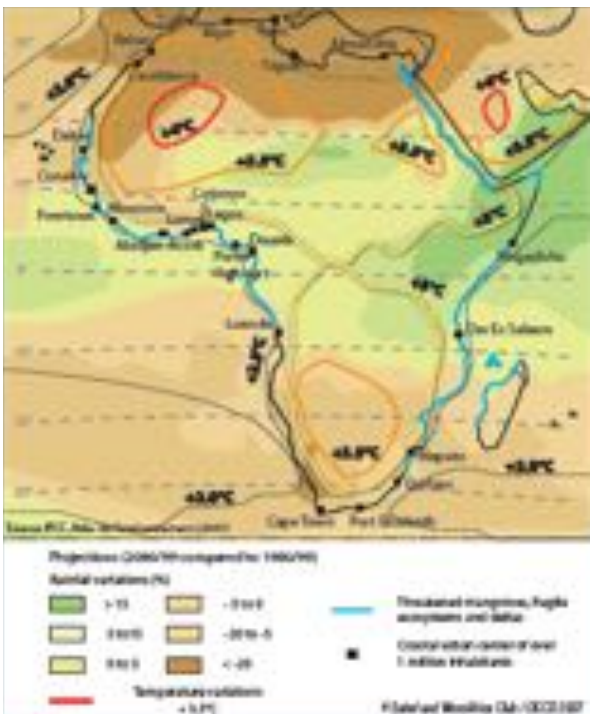
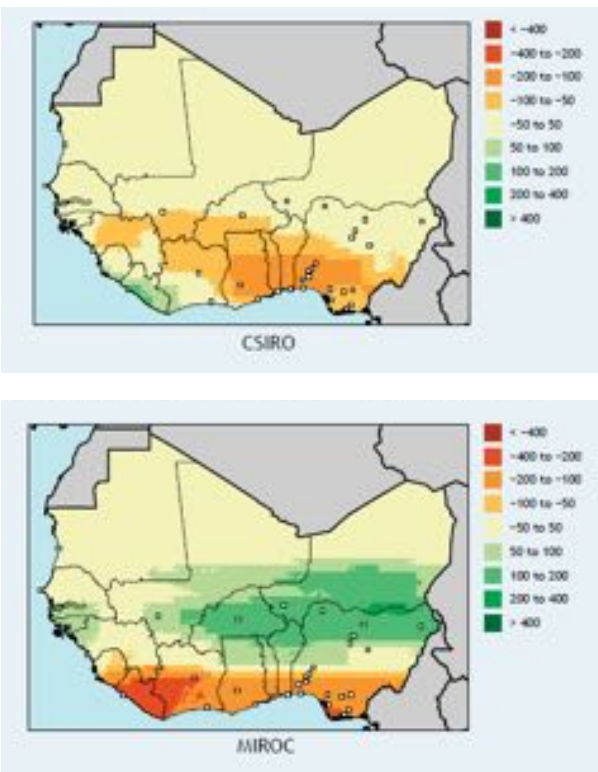
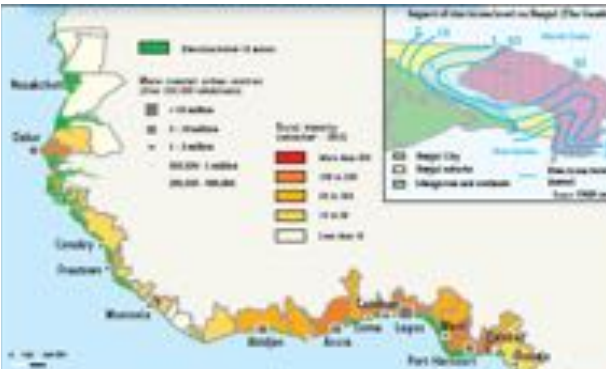


Figure 26: Change in mean annual precipitation in West Africa, 2000-2050



Source: Abdulai Jalloh, Gerald C. Nelson, Timothy S. Thomas, Robert Zougmore, and Harold Roy-Macauley. 2013. West African Agriculture and Climate Change: A comprehensive analysis. IFPRI Issue Brief. Washington DC: International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI). August.

Figure 28: Main vulnerable urban centres and coastal regions in West Africa



Source: Atlas on regional integration in West Africa – Environment Series: Climate Change.



PART 2: THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY AND RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS IN WEST AFRICA

This section provides an overview of the role of civil society in West Africa. It traces its evolution since the end of the Second World War, showing how civil societies emerge and develop within particular local and international contexts. In West Africa as elsewhere, civil society appears as both a product and a shaper of domestic and regional dynamics. This brings us to the main question under consideration here, namely: “What is the role for civil society in the public square today and in the future?” The section is concerned with civil society broadly defined, but also has a particular interest in the role of religious institutions.

This paper will follow the broad definition of civil society used by scholar Emmanuel Gyimah-Boadi in his 1996 paper on the topic. He defines civil society as “the ensemble of intermediate organisations that lie between the state and the household, that are formed voluntarily by members of society to protect and advance their interests and values, and that are separate from the state and largely autonomous” (Gyimah-Boadi, 1996). This definition includes non-governmental organisations (NGOs), but notably also organised labour and student groups, professional bodies (e.g. bar, medical or university faculty) and business associations, private voluntary organisations (including community-based organisations and social movements) as well as religious bodies.

Scholar Ebenezer Obadare (2014) argued that precursors to West Africa’s modern civil society could be seen in the colonial era, or specifically towards its end when networks of associations stepped up to challenge colonial regimes and pushed for self-determination. In his words, these movements were led by “an emergent intelligentsia that mobilised indigenous histories and cultural repertoires to fashion a narrative in which Africans emerged as authentic and autonomous historical agents”. Of particular interest was the pan-regional nature of institutions such as the West African Students Union or the West African Youth League. Most of the elites driving these movements became leaders in the newly independent states.

Around 40 years after independence, civil society was again at the forefront of a big shift, this time from authoritarianism to the advent of democracy. Though one should not discount the influence of external forces such as the fall of the Berlin Wall and pressure from foreign donors, the main push for democratisation in these countries came from domestic civil society. It started in 1989 in Benin, when the mobilisation of a network of student bodies, community organisations, churches and religious groups, trade unions, women’s associations and other groups resulted in the ousting of leader Mathieu Kérékou in a civilian coup. Inspired by the Eastern European underground, these groups from across the political and cultural spectrum were united in their opposition to autocratic rule and economic mismanagement (Gyimah-Boadi, 1996).

Similar movements quickly spread across West Africa as well as to other parts of the continent. In Mali, union activism as

well as student protests played an important role, while in countries like Ghana and Togo, pressure came from student groups as well as from middle-class associations of lawyers and professors. Christian churches and their governing structures (e.g. ecumenical bodies and episcopal conferences) equally played an important role in countries like Nigeria and Ghana. Gyimah-Boadi (1996) explained that church organisations and their leaders often served to mediate tensions between inflexible autocrats and impatient democrats. He cited the examples of Togo and Benin: in Togo Archbishop Fanoko Kpadzro was appointed to head the body mandated to chart the country’s future, while in Benin Bishop Isodore de Souza headed the body that presided over the 1991 multiparty elections and the transition that followed.

Even as many countries in West Africa saw democratic gains, the civil wars that broke out in Liberia (at the end of 1989/beginning of 1990) and Sierra Leone (in 1991) sent shockwaves of instability across the region. Obadare (2014) stated it well when he noted that, in the aftermath of the wars and transitions of the 1990s, West Africa remained “poised between despair and hope”.

Bolstered by the transitions of the 1990s, the region entered the final decade of the 20th century with great expectations for the role of civil society. The shape that civil society took also underwent some profound changes over this period. Notably, democratisation opened the door to assistance from the West. The 1990s saw a proliferation of local non-governmental organisations (NGOs), supported financially by bilateral agencies, United Nations bodies and international NGOs (Gyimah-Boadi, 1996). These organisations are active on a host of issues ranging from democracy and governance, human rights, peacebuilding, emergency relief and development (broadly defined to include issues related to health and education).

Assessments of the role of civil society since this time depend very much on who one asks. On the one hand, civil society is often regarded as the third “leg” of the three-legged stool of democracy, the other two being government and the private sector. The popularity of civil society in West Africa is underscored by the exponential growth of NGOs in the last two decades. Defenders of civil society include, but are not limited to, the many NGOs¹ active in the field and the partners

who continue to support them. Yet the sector is not without its challenges. In his 1996 article, Gyimah-Boadi pointed to the challenges facing African civil society's contribution to democratic consolidation, following the sector's success in ushering in democracy. Obadare (2014) in turn considered limitations to civil society's contribution to development. He argued that perhaps expectations were unrealistic to start off with. This includes expectations of the role of civil society versus that of the state in development. Maintaining an independent voice and character also proves challenging when the sector continues to rely for its survival on the goodwill (both financial and otherwise) of government and foreign donors.

The debate about the role of civil society is not limited – or unique – to West Africa. Globally, the world of development is in flux. The global financial crisis has not left development finance untouched. NGOs and other civil society organisations are under increasing pressure to prove their impact, as reflected in the exponential growth of the field of monitoring and evaluation (M&E). For the last decade or so, the development discourse has been dominated by the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). The MDG era officially comes to an end in 2015, to be followed by the so-called post-2015 development agenda, or the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The shift entails not only a shift in goals, but also in means. This has an impact on financing mechanisms and, by extension, on the character and shape of civil society.

In the midst of these debates, one should be careful not to miss developments that do not fit neatly into the dominant discourse of the moment. One particularly notable initiative is the Liberia Mass Action for Peace. Fifteen years after the outbreak of civil war in Liberia, conflict was still raging, with combatants on all sides refusing to negotiate. In July 2002, two female social workers who both held prominent positions in the Lutheran church of Liberia mobilised thousands of local women in a months-long peaceful protest against the war. They were soon joined by Muslim women. The bigger movement became known as the Women of Liberia Mass Action for Peace. Their strategies included peace vigils in churches and mosques, mass meetings in Monrovia's city hall, street marches, daily sit-ins and a sex strike. Once the factions agreed to negotiate, the women locked down the negotiating hall by blocking all doors and windows and refusing to move until an agreement was signed. This happened in August 2003 (Tavaana, 2013 & Navarro, 2010).

The Liberia Mass Action for Peace was significant for a number of reasons, not at least of which is the leading role it played in ending a protracted war. The initiative should also be noted for the way it brought Christians and Muslims together (a first in Liberia) and mobilised across other divisions of ethnicity and socio-economic status (Tavaana, 2013). It also made a significant contribution to women's rights, with Liberia's first female president being elected in 2005, not long after the end of the war. Finally, the movement arose at a time when civil liberties in Liberia were extremely limited (Tavaana, 2013). From Liberia, lessons from the initiative spread across West Africa through a network known as the Women in Peacebuilding Network (WIPNET). The tactics of the Liberia movement were replicated in Ivory Coast to protest against

the political stalemate in their country in 2011. In the same year, the leader of the Liberia Mass Action for Peace, Leymah Gbowee, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in recognition of her role in the movement.

Despite these successes, Obadare (2014) discerned a more recent loss of confidence in the power of collective action across the region, which he ascribed to a feeling of impotence in the face of powerful global economic and cultural forces (Obadare, 2014). Yet, there are also new opportunities for expanding the public space, facilitated by the rapid adoption of communication technologies, especially by the youth (Obadare, 2014).

The discussion will now turn briefly to the specific role of religious institutions – a sub-set of civil society.

ROLE OF RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS IN WEST AFRICA

This section will explore the major trends shaping the engagement of religious formations in the public square, with particular emphasis on the following structural, operational and contextual trends;

ORGANIC STRUCTURES: The extent of religious affiliation and practice in the form of informal association and liturgical participation;

FORMAL (META) STRUCTURES: Ecumenical, intra- as well as inter-faith bodies and formations that are active at national and regional level;

MANDATES AND LEGACY: The historic and contemporary role of these organic and formal structures and how they have fared in the public square, particularly in engagement with the three spheres of politics, economic (commerce) and social services;

LEGAL STATUS: Whether these institutions are required to be registered with the state, are regulated and reported on.

These will be outlined at a macro level to derive a baseline forecast of the changes shaping the future role of religious groups in engagement in the public square in the region.

The Mass Action for Peace discussed above is an example of where religion – and specifically different religions, i.e. Christianity and Islam – contributed to social cohesion. Gyimah-Boadi (1996) discussed how, in West Africa, civil society as a whole is quite good at aggregating the interests of large numbers of people and providing viable non-state networks of social interaction, cultural expression and economic subsistence. Many people in the region have found refuge in a diversity of associational forms. This includes religious organisations, which serve as a source of hope for the vast majority of people in the region. From the perspective of organisational viability, religious organisations and specifically churches (both Protestant and Catholic), have a number of advantages, including large memberships, strong, complex and capable national organisations, politically sophisticated leaders, financial security and independence, and international contacts (Gyimah-Boadi, 1996).

Challenges faced by such organisations include competition (among themselves and with other faiths) and criticisms of being elitist or from colonial origin. The largest challenge faced by associations (including religious ones), however, have

“THE MASS ACTION FOR PEACE DISCUSSED ABOVE IS AN EXAMPLE OF WHERE RELIGION – AND SPECIFICALLY DIFFERENT RELIGIONS, I.E. CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM – CONTRIBUTED TO SOCIAL COHESION.”

been that they have found it hard to transcend ethno-regional, religious and other cleavages (Gyimah-Boadi, 1996). West Africans are acutely aware that religion could be a divisive force. It is difficult to find examples of sectarian violence in the region. This is reflected also in the Pew study, which found concerns related to religious conflict as well as to religious extremism (Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, 2010). Representative and ecumenical bodies in the region, who work hard to overcome this challenge, acknowledge this.

A discussion of some key bodies and their focus are as follows:

THE AFRICA INTERFAITH INITIATIVE ON POST-2015² aims to enhance the participation of Africa's faith communities and leaders in shaping the post-2015 development agenda. For example, they have recently organised a side-event on financing for development in Africa. Organisations participating in the initiative include: the Organisation of African Instituted Churches (OAIC); the Association of Evangelicals in Africa (AEA); the Council of Anglican Provinces of Africa (CAPA); the Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar (SECAM); the All Africa Conference of Churches; the Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (NSCIA); the Union of Muslim Councils of East, Central and Southern Africa; and the African Council of Religious Leaders (ACRL).

THE AFRICAN COUNCIL OF RELIGIOUS LEADERS (ACRL)/RELIGIONS FOR PEACE (RFP)³ is a multi-religious organisation that facilitates cooperation at multiple levels. Their focus areas include conflict transformation and peace building; advancing the notion of shared security; sustainable development and protecting the Earth. They also coordinate a number of networks including one for women of faith and one for religious youth. Though there is no West African regional office, ACRL membership includes inter-religious councils in many countries in the region, including Benin, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone.

THE ALL AFRICA CONFERENCE OF CHURCHES⁴ is an association of Protestant, Anglican, Orthodox and Indigenous churches in Africa and a member of the worldwide ecumenical network. Its formation in 1963 marked the end of the missionary era and the beginning of the autonomy of African churches. Their programmes include: theology, ecumenical and interfaith relations; empowerment, diakonia and development (including poverty reduction, climate change and the post-MDG agenda); family life and gender justice; and peace

and advocacy. West African members include Methodist, Anglican, Presbyterian, Lutheran and Baptist as well as a few Pentecostal churches in Benin, Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Gambia, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo.

THE ASSOCIATION OF EVANGELICALS IN AFRICA⁵ was formed in 1966 with the aim of mobilising and empowering evangelical churches and mission agencies for total transformation in Africa through evangelisation and effective discipleship. Their projects include: theological education; schools of theology; development of learning materials; the African International University; and a project focusing on the proclamation of the gospel by the media in Africa. Representatives in West Africa include evangelical fellowships, federations, associations and alliances in Benin, Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal and Sierra Leone.

THE ORGANISATION OF AFRICAN INSTITUTED CHURCHES (OAIC)⁶ was founded in 1975. It is a representative body of African Independent and Instituted Churches (AICs). AICs are home-grown African churches, founded originally during the colonial period, that have developed indigenous forms of worship, theology and social organisation, all inspired by a vision both Christian and African. Many Pentecostal churches would fall into this camp. The OAIC has programmes on: health (focus on HIV and AIDS); livelihoods (started as a focus on subsistence agriculture, but has since expanded from the local level to focus also on macro issues including financial mismanagement, weak policy formulation, inequality, trade imbalances and climate change); just communities (focusing on community organising groups for social justice, broadly defined). OAIC is active in both Anglophone and Francophone West Africa. The organisation has over 30 members in Nigeria and around 11 in Ghana.

THE SYMPOSIUM OF EPISCOPAL CONFERENCES OF AFRICA AND MADAGASCAR⁷ was launched in the 1960s with the aim of representing the Catholic Church in Africa. In addition to a Biblical Centre for Africa and Madagascar (BICAM), focus areas of the symposium include: justice peace and development; good governance; HIV/AIDS; continental matters (related to the African Union, African parliamentary affairs, migrant and tourism). The body's regional representation is based in Nigeria. It has national representation in all other ECOWAS countries.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The future of West Africa will depend largely on three factors; Firstly, whether good governance can overcome debilitating corruption and state incapacity?

Secondly, whether the appetite for long-term investments that are non-extractive can be created and maintained at scale?

Finally, whether the deep fissures in the social fabric, both socio-economically as well as socio-culturally, can be managed and mitigates sufficiently to achieve the former two?

Due precisely to the complex and interconnected challenges facing ECOWAS, civil society and religious communities in particular have a pivotal role to play in shaping the future of the region. Politicians, needing to manage volatile constituency and patronage networks to obtain and leverage political power, are unlikely to transcend short-termism sufficiently to provide the authentic leadership that creating the region's future demands. Similarly, private sector executives, constrained by the interests of their shareholders and need to show a consistent return on investment, will unlikely be incentivised sufficiently to set the pace of an inclusive and sustainable path for the region. So it falls to civil society and perhaps partially to religious leaders to provide both the long-term perspective and the ethical inspiration to frame the region's challenges and options in a manner that is consistent with a desirable future trajectory. However, for civil society to make a meaningful contribution in this manner would necessitate that the sector transcend the current perocialism that marks much of its engagements with government, business and the community.

The observations made in the process of this study highlight 9 critical agenda points that civil society will need to adopt and pursue in order to meaningfully contribute to creating a prosperous and stable future for West Africa. These are:

1. Develop a standard for **GOOD GOVERNANCE**, accountability and transparency, as well as the institutional mechanisms to effectively hold to account civil society institutions, business and government formations.
2. Develop the capacity for **EFFECTIVE GRASSROOTS ENTERPRISE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**, not as a secondary means to mission, but as a primary mode of community engagement, working in collaboration and partnership with government and mainstream business where necessary.
3. Articulate and pursue a multi-pronged strategy for **STRUCTURAL SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT** in the areas of education,

healthcare and skills development to alter the long-term trajectory of the poor, unemployed and marginalised communities and importantly, the youth.

4. Develop a strategy to aggressively **LEVERAGE TECHNOLOGY AND MOBILE CONNECTIVITY** in service of the former initiatives.
5. Crystallise a model for **INCLUSIVE, PARTICIPATIVE COMMUNITY-BASED LEADERSHIP** both in the work undertaken as well as to provide a model for use in other spheres.
6. Seek to find and popularise **COMMON GROUND AND COMMON PURPOSE** within and across diverse religious and ethnic communities, finding ways to work together on shared problems and joint solutions.
7. Invest in the knowledge and development of **CLIMATE MITIGATION** strategies such as in agriculture and water security provision.
8. Intentionally introduce mechanisms for **ENHANCING THE PROSPERITY OF THE NORTHERN REGIONS** on the back of likely more rapid developments in the south.
9. Intentionally reconceptualise the **INTER-CONNECTIONS BETWEEN CURRENT POCKETS OF DEVELOPMENT, GROWTH AND EXCELLENCE**, into a network of inter-connected centres of excellence so as to tie the regions between them in to the value chain of development.

The challenges of the region in this era and the potential role of civil society are reminiscent of the role of the social institutions created in the monastic period in Europe, where civil society and religious institutions served as centres of educational, agricultural and productive endeavour while broader society largely languished in poverty and underdevelopment. For communities to contribute similarly in the next development phase of ECOWAS will require, as outlined above, a wholesale awakening to the broad and contextual systemic issues at play in the region. This may imply, to an extent, the development of an entirely new mandate for civil society, not as a passive partner to the state and business but at the custodian of the common good, presiding authentically and with rigour, over the development of a sustainable political-economy for the region. This will necessitate a considerable commitment to developing new perspectives, new skills and new project approaches that are able to deliver on the work required to meet these protracted needs.



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